

*AKARUI UNCANNY:*  
Race, Sex, and Knowledge Under Occupation

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I dedicate this work to my mother, Isabel.

## ***Akarui* Uncanny: Sex, Race, and Knowledge Under Occupation**

“We may say that war is an expression of a great natural law of blood mixture. Mixed reproduction always follows wars. The terrible condition of unlicensed prostitution on the streets... is overwhelming, just like a... flood so powerful that nothing can be done to prevent it.” – *Jiji Shinpo*, 1947

In the opening paragraphs of an essay published in the October 1947 issue of *Ōru Yomimono* the literary critic and essayist Sakaguchi Ango tells his readers that he had recently met with a group of young women called “pan pan girls” at a café. Aided by a stenographer who “secretly recorded their conversation” and a yakuza boss as an interlocutor, Sakaguchi (and, by proxy, the reader) learns that his interviewees include “five senior pan pan along with each of their two to three subordinates.” The writer of *Darakuron* (Theory of Decadence, 1946) thus begins his portrait of the fashionably dressed young women whom he later reveals are freelance streetwalkers who, in the period immediately following Japan’s defeat in the Asia-Pacific War, chose to run away from home to work in the unregulated sex industry. Inflected by Sakaguchi’s curiosity and fascination, the pan pan are described as a strain of prostitutes entirely different from the “prostitutes who worked in cavernous brothels.” Throughout, he romanticizes the pan pan’s eccentricity, celebrating it as a kind of “individualism” that gives them, in his words, “an overall sense of *akarui* (bright, fresh)”:

The pan pan girls have, I think, an overall sense of *akarui*. In contrast to the prostitutes who work in cavernous brothels, with the pan pan girls that which we call darkness is almost never there; a manner of hardened depravity is also lacking. They do, certainly, have a sense of this kind of roughness, but it is entirely different from that of the brothel prostitutes. Unlike women who work at

*inchiki* (translation: money swindling) bars, pan pan girls have an air of innocence and brightness.<sup>1</sup>

In these laudatory comments, Sakaguchi's text signals the possibility of understanding the freelance sex workers as inhabiting entirely different social strata altogether. In the next paragraph, the writer even goes on to say that their "sense of *akarui*" gives them "an air of nobility." After all, the term *akarui* carries the multiple meanings of the English adjectives "fresh," "clean," and "happy." Pan pan girls, he describes, live wherever they please and are "not bound to anyone" or "shackled" by social expectations. To Sakaguchi, pan pan girls' "air of innocence and brightness" makes them almost unrecognizable as sex workers given that their disposition is, according to his conjectures, "entirely different" from that of the women who work in the regulated sex industry (the *inchiki* bars, for instance). In fact, he claims that the pan pan girls "could fool anyone" into believing that they are "honors students from all girls' schools" or "young ladies from good homes" because they give off the innocent and bright appearance of a paradigm of femininity and feminine behavior. Eventually, he calls them a "symbol" of the entire nation.

Yet, as the essay continues, we get a clearer sense that Sakaguchi's café companions, the "symbol" of the entire nation, lead anything but "fresh," "clean," or "happy" lives. They are runaways, victims of police brutality, and reviled by others who wish, against Sakaguchi's opinions, for them to "disappear." Their lack of boundaries—which is, in fact, a form of homelessness that the writer describes as "having no fixed abodes"—also make them susceptible to often living vagrant, though flashy, lifestyles. Those who age find themselves in competition with the younger, prettier pan pan, and even when they marry or leave the sex industry, one of

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<sup>1</sup> All translations of Sakaguchi's text are the author's.

the women tells him, many return to “fooling around” in pursuit of the “more pleasurable lifestyle” offered in what Sakaguchi paints as an alternative culture of desirable outsiders.

What Sakaguchi calls “a sense of *akarui*,” I will argue, deceptively carries a double meaning. It is, on the one hand, an anchor in his satirical portrayal of his interviewees, but, on the other, it is also a signifier for his satire about postwar society. By calling the pan pan girls *akarui*, Sakaguchi in fact gives light to the realization that they, as figurations of a broader context, can neither be defined nor fully represented. *Akarui* is, ultimately, a condition by which the pan pan can become an object of analysis, rather than a participating subject in their own representation because they ultimately function to represent what Sakaguchi sees as an overarching social condition, one that is haunted, in many ways, by the signs and meanings attached to the garishly dressed and deceptively ladylike figure of transgressive feminine sexuality and, more importantly, the Allied Occupation.

One of several of Sakaguchi’s postwar social commentaries on women, sexuality, and liberation<sup>2</sup> this essay, titled “*Pan pan gāru*,” is a portrayal of freelance streetwalkers who presumably catered exclusively to foreign—usually assumed U.S. American—clientele during the Occupation of Japan. As many scholars have noted, discussions around militarized sex work and sexual trafficking have gained increasing recognition in both scholarly and journalistic reports about Japanese Imperialism and the Asia-Pacific War. Nevertheless, the extent to which the Occupation made use of the structures of the Japanese empire is not widely discussed. As proven through the many fictional, historical, and autobiographical accounts, the existence of military comfort women during the war was not a secret and, in fact, the comfort woman has become a central character in recounts of experiences of the Asia-Pacific War. But

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<sup>2</sup> Other notable works on the figure of the *akujo* (prostitute) by Sakaguchi include the two-part chronicle, *Senso to Hitori no Onna* (One Woman and the War, 1946).

representations of the Allied Occupation's relationship to military prostitution, though also numerous, are not equally discussed or recognized even though a historical proximity suggests that the comfort woman and the pan pan have, at least, discursive links and may share a genealogical lineage. But suggesting this proximity or the pan pan's proximity to other forms of sexual labor (or exploitation) is problematic, even in the context of military prostitution in other parts of East Asia, because the political rhetoric and agenda that gives voice to comfort women actively ignores its affinities to the military sex work industry that developed through the Allied Occupation of East Asia and through the neo-imperial network of U.S. military bases commonly regarded as Pax Americana.<sup>3</sup> No cries of contestation, nationalistic protests, or discourse on redress apply to the pan pan girls or their invisible testimonies. The reason for this likely lies in the operative hegemonic influence that the United States has and continues to have over modes of retelling these stories about the Occupation and sex work. And so while, on the one hand, the postwar treatment of Japanese war crimes and, particularly, the matter of sexual enslavement and trafficking of thousands of women from colonized spaces has failed to come into full disclosure, on the other, the conditions that silenced many victims' experiences of the war also were funneled into the silencing of those who experienced a semi-colonial regime masked as post-colonial (or anti-colonial) nationalist politics. In other words, the defeat of Japan in the war did not defeat, on a systemic level, the Japanese empire itself, but reproduced it and its hegemonic power through the practice of occlusion.

This thesis is an exploration on what it means to read textual and visual representations of the Occupation and of pan pan girls through the scope of race, sexuality, and empire. When she does enter into discussions about the Occupation, the pan pan girl is very often regarded as a

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<sup>3</sup> For a more expansive discussion about the tensions surrounding the linking of the comfort woman and the Occupation and Cold War era military prostitute, see Grace Cho's *Haunting the Korean Diaspora* (2008).

symbol of U.S. hegemony and Japan's defeat and occupation by a foreign power. Sakaguchi's representation of the pan pan girl, however, complicates this interpretation because it implements her as both a figure of revelation as well as one that is discursively cut off from representing herself without the mediation of either Sakaguchi or the yakuza boss who guides the discussion. And so, even though neither the war nor the Occupation are once mentioned throughout the short essay, it is nevertheless important to see how Sakaguchi invokes a referent of the Occupation and Occupation period policies toward sexual labor within his portrayal and, particularly, in the nuances of the term *akarui*. More specifically, this analysis regards a question on how the figure of the pan pan illuminates or reveals (freshens) that which is not immediately legible within a text or image. While the texts that I chose to discuss are merely *representative* of a much, much larger sample of representations on prostitution, I see them as encompassing the discursive registers that I am most interested in exploring throughout this work.

### **Pan Pan: A Historical Overview**

Sakaguchi's essay was published the year following the dissolution of the Japanese government-sponsored organization called the Recreation and Amusement Association (RAA\_, which, immediately following the end of the Asia-Pacific War, sought and recruited so-called Special Comfort Women (*tokushū ianfu*) during the early stages of the Occupation. Employed at "comfort facilities," Special Comfort women provided sexual services to military servicemen and other Occupation employees. The rhetoric framing the justification of these establishments and the coercion of thousands of women into positions was both attractive and held patriotic allure and the promise of economic gain.<sup>4</sup> In the political theatre, the very officials who, just

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<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, 128



before, had formed part of the body of ideologues and politicians who were condemned as war criminals and subsequently given roles in the political reform, insinuated that the government-employed “professionals” could act as necessary sacrifices to be given up as “buffers” against the rape and infiltration of the “upstanding women of society.”<sup>5</sup> Given up thus, according to Minister of Finance Ikeda Hayato’s words, to protect the purity of Japan’s “Yamato bloodline,” these women embodied both a protective attempt by the state to prevent foreign G.I.’s from violating the nation’s “good women” and, implicitly, were markers for the threat of racial contamination. The rumor of rape legitimized the inception of the RAA and spread throughout all of Japan and Okinawa by the time that the United States military established its headquarters in the archipelago. And so, a discourse of sacrifice continued throughout the establishment of such comfort facilities. But such a response to the threat of rape carried with it what Ikeda most warned against: the necessity to deal with the Occupation as a matter of life and death for racial purity—paternalistic rhetoric that figured the body of the nation (and its conflation with race) into female sexuality. The question of race and the penetrability of the national body were used to justify the RAA as an act of nationalism by implementing arbitrary methods of differentiating “good” Japanese women from those who could be sacrificed. A November 1945 press translation from the GHQ summarizes a roundtable discussion of the “Tokyo Special Recreation Organization for Occupation Forces.” The participants cited include Chairman of the Tokyo branch of the RAA, cabaret manager Ishida Kazumoto, representatives from the Tokyo police, and two cabaret dancers, “AKUNA, Hanako and MUTO, Hiroko.” In the following statements by Ishida and the representative of the police board, the portrayal of the RAA employees offers a

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<sup>5</sup> Chazono 2014, 11

glance into the discourse that shaped such attitudes about sex work and its facile polarization around the question of nationalism:

ISHIDA: The purpose of this round table discussion is to find out what is going on in TOKYO in an unrestrained talk about ourselves. Some girls are dancing with American soldiers. On the surface, they appear to be dancing for a living, but actually they are playing the role of modern “OKICHIS of SHINODA.” ([Translator]: In unsubstantiated folklore, OKICHI was made TOWNSEND HARRIS’s mistress for the good of the nation.)

TSUJI: On 22 August, representatives of seven amusement groups including TOKYO Cooks Union, the Geisha Union, the Geisha House Union, and the Prostitutes Union, were called to the Metropolitan Police Board. The atmosphere at that time was tense and quite different from today. Women and children were warned to keep off the streets during the occupation by the Allied Forces. No wonder the Metropolitan Police Board thought it necessary to organize a group ready to sacrifice itself for Japanese womanhood... Next morning, we went to the Imperial Palace and vowed to serve like a TOKKOTAI (special attack corps). It was indeed with a tragic feeling that we commenced upon our enterprise and so the “special recreation organization” was formed. The demand was to create fifty to sixty thousand OKICHI.<sup>6</sup>

And thus, the invocation of a historical origin legitimizes the militarization of sexuality in the newly established battleground: women’s bodies. “For the good of the nation,” sixty thousand “OKICHI” in Tokyo alone were given up like ritual sacrifices to the domination of a monstrous yet ambiguous entity called “America.”

Four months after the institution of the RAA, however, concerns over the spread of venereal disease led to the shutdown of the comfort facilities. Both the Japanese government and the Occupation General Headquarters (GHQ)<sup>7</sup> became increasingly concerned with the way that RAA opened up a reality about the Occupation’s role in bringing to light an inability to contain

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<sup>6</sup> Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. *Dartmouth Digital Library. Press Translations, Japanese: Social Series*, Series 032, Translation 107 (1945): 2. Web.

<sup>7</sup> This is in reference to the General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (General James McArthur), who oversaw the reform and restoration of the Japanese government during the Occupation.

and control, as nationalist discourse professed, interracial sexual relations. Above all, at the center of military sex work lay the new reality that neither policy making system wanted to engage overtly: the birth of a mixed race population. In collaboration with GHQ personnel, the Japanese government and police forces began to take measures to control what they saw as problems tied to military prostitution. While the end of the system of regulated sex work had led to the official dissolution of the RAA, it did not lead to the termination of prostitution altogether—hence, the emergence of the derogatorily called, fashionable yet garish, “pan pan girls” of Sakaguchi’s portrait.

Pan pan girls became conduits to recapitulate the implications of interracial sexual relations and feminine sexual agency during what was predominantly, even in sociological and political discourse, a collective imagination about a *figure*, rather than a concrete subject, that was imaginatively portrayed as a symbol of collective trauma and shame. Often caught within the myopic scope of misogynist discourse, the trope of the military prostitute surfaces in numerous literary and visual representations, appropriated and interpreted as a sign for the crisis of a crisis of masculinity, or a metaphor the trajectory of postwar Japanese national humiliation. While Sakaguchi insists, at the end of his essay, that the pan pan are a symbol of the nation, his text also speaks of an anxiety on behalf of the poor Tokyoites who “probably don’t have to worry about getting solicited by pan pan.” Mizoguchi Kenji’s late 1940’s films chronicle the lives of women whose tragic conditions in the postwar impoverishment lead them to sacrifice their morals to red light districts and express, without a shortage of tears, their contrition. Meanwhile, the sociologist and anti-prostitution activist Kanzaki Kiyoshi likened districts where pan pan dwelled to zoos “without cages,” calling for a need to confine what he overtly deemed as a different species of women altogether. Even in well-regarded academic discourse (both in

English and Japanese), the pan pan girl is repeatedly depicted as a symbol of defeat or otherwise tied to a resonating image of a nationalized castration anxiety.

Indeed, while the pan pan lends (or is made to lend) herself to an easy narrative and its interpretations, she does not appear, in literature or the popular imaginary, as a subjective voice about women's experiences in the postwar. Rather, the pan pan is usually represented as a figure for the psychological dimensions of a specifically masculinized experience within the economies of sexuality and desire and the double context of Japan's loss of empire and its experience of Occupation. Nevertheless, I want to suggest, using Sakaguchi's term *akarui*, that the figure of the pan pan illuminates and refreshes the memory of an present closeness to the occlusions and silences of the archive that chronicles her figuration. My focus on the figure of the pan pan does not reify her as a phenomenon or anomaly, but rather as a *case* of literary and discursive analysis that views the figure of the sex worker as playing a role in illuminating, disentangling, and challenging the way that the Occupation created a racist and gendered discourse about Japan that has, in scholarship and popular understandings, been polemically normalized.

The pan pan, I will argue, is a figure that acts as a point of attachment for a collective fantasy on racial and gender relations during the immediate postwar. This analysis is therefore at the level of discourse and looks to explain the components of what I see as a rhetorical crossroads in the framings of sex and race not only in fictional or sociological representation, but also in the context of academic representation. An exploration of the possibility of understanding representation beyond national concepts of tropes, "Akarui Uncanny" draws from concepts and theories in psychoanalysis, trauma studies, translation studies, feminism, and critical race studies to develop upon narratives and analyses on representations of postwar military sex work by

focusing on the construction of a figure and her relationship to the construction of xenophobic nationalisms in and about Japan during the postwar.

Throughout this piece, I will furthermore incorporate Sakaguchi's nuanced term "*akarui*" to consider how it might figure into other representations of the alienated and othered figuration (the pan pan) that Sakaguchi uses it to describe. I am particularly interested in this term not only because of its repetition throughout "*Pan pan gāru*," but because it harbors, for Sakaguchi, an understanding of something that represents how the familiarity of the pan pan girls (in that pan pan girls can look like regular young ladies from "good homes") is, at the same time, part of their unfamiliar disparity and homelessness that makes them a *symbol*, but not part of, the national community. What makes the pan pan *akarui* is, in fact, not that they are "bright" or "fresh," but that they are, borrowing Sigmund Freud's term *uncanny*—*Unheimlich*, both of and other to the familiar. The *akarui* uncanny, as I will argue, is part of the postwar representation of pan pan girls because it bears within it the meaning of synchronous proximity and distance from the implications embodied in this heavily marginalized figure. Through this understanding, this work rethinks the figure of the pan pan as a condition of an irrefutable closeness to the constructions of the image and imagination of Japan's relationship to the Allied Occupation, and, particularly, to the United States. The term *akarui* uncanny therefore frames this very narrow focus on how representations of pan pan girls allow for an observation and orchestration of encounters among race, gender, and nationalism through the scope of sexuality and sexual relations.

### ***Akarui* Uncanny**

Feminist and postcolonial criticism (and, importantly, postcolonial feminist criticism) has adopted the widely discussed psychoanalytic theory "the uncanny" as both a polemical and

productive concept that establishes links between femininity and strangeness. At its origin in Freud's reading of the work by the early twentieth century psychoanalyst Ernst Jentsch,<sup>8</sup> the *Unheimlich* (unhomely, uncanny) is a disturbing return of a repression. After seeking its meaning in many of the definitions of the *Unheimlich* and its foil, the *Heimlich* (of the home, canny), Freud finally settles on a definition from Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling's *Philosophy of Mythology* (1857), which, according to Freud, "throws quite a new light on the concept":

In general we are reminded that the word '*heimlich*' is not unambiguous, but belongs to two sets of ideas, which, without being contradictory, are yet very different: on the one hand it means what is familiar and agreeable, and on the other, what is concealed and kept out of sight. '*Unheimlich*' is customarily used, we are told, as the contrary only of the first signification of '*heimlich*', and not of the second. Sanders tells us nothing concerning a possible genetic connection between these two meanings of *heimlich*. On the other hand, we notice that Schelling says something which throws quite a new light on the concept of the *Unheimlich*, for which we were certainly not prepared. According to him, everything is *unheimlich* that ought to have remained secret and hidden but has come to light.<sup>9</sup>

As the concept of a failed repression, the uncanny, for Freud was paradigmatic of a *genetic* connection between the familiar and the unfamiliar or defamiliarized. Given this understanding, Freud linked the uncanny to the idea of castration anxiety, as the concept resonated to the ambivalence of female genitalia, despite (or because of) its undecidability and ambiguity. It is unsurprising, therefore, that for many feminist critics of psychoanalytic theory, the deconstruction of Freud's essay, rather than its close analysis, has been one of the most fruitful and productive modes for its expansion as a theory that regards the intrepidity of femininity and the growth of modern anxieties established around gender and sexual difference and the will to

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<sup>8</sup> In 1906, Jentsch published an article titled "On the Psychology of the Uncanny" that Freud later used for his critique in 1919. See Freud (1997).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 199-200

relegate an archetypal irrationality to femininity, while masculinizing the will to rationality.<sup>10</sup> Likewise, in postcolonial criticism, the uncanny has been read in line with a critique on the production of knowledge around the colonial Other as a sense of estrangement resulting from, according to Ranjana Khanna, “the loss of something irretrievable but unidentifiable in the current state of entering into civil society.” “Very often,” Khanna elaborates, “it is marked by violence in the shape of spontaneous insurgency and its quelling. The entry into civil society is marked, always, by an epistemic violence.”<sup>11</sup>

Although they may not be entirely adaptable to the context of the Occupation of Japan, these developments inform my understanding of the uncanny as a concept that points to the consequences of the legibility of silence, double meaning, violence, erasure, and, above all, revelation. To underscore how the complexities of representations of pan pan girls and their relationship to the psychoanalytic notion of the uncanny illuminate a possibility for a broader scope for critique, I turn to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s understanding of the Freudian concept in her analysis of literature, in particular. In *Death of a Discipline* (2003), Spivak discusses that the uncanny connotes a figure of difference bound within a gendered experience of colonialism, decolonization, and postcoloniality. The uncanny, for Spivak, furthermore refuses a partitioning between the familiar and unfamiliar:

The *Heimlich/Unheimlich* relationship is, indeed, formally the defamiliarization of familiar space. But its substantive type does not have to be the entrance of the vagina. Colonialism, decolonization, and postcoloniality involved special kinds of traffic with people deemed “other”—the familiarity of a presumed common humanity defamiliarized, as it were. I am not suggesting that there is a necessary connection between these politicoeconomic phenomena and the specific image

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<sup>10</sup> See, for instance, Hélène Cixous’s “Fiction and Its Phantoms: A Reading of Freud’s *Das Unheimlich*” (1976)

<sup>11</sup> Khanna 2003, 244

that figures the uncanny for Freud and his patients. I am recording a certain difference in the figuration that I noticed in three novels.<sup>12</sup>

Spivak moreover reads the uncanny as an undoing of the idea that “[w]hat is home—to be human in the world—becomes inhospitable, provoking anxiety or *Angst*.” A “peculiar” affect, the definition of the uncanny implies, for Spivak’s readings, “a source of fear and anxiety (*Angst*)” that unfolds in the literary text as “something called ‘colonialism.’”<sup>13</sup> Through the intersections among gender, race, and class, her work therefore asks, “How can literary studies prepare us for the multiple issue of gender justice?”<sup>14</sup>—a question inextricable from her close readings that is instructive in my project. Notwithstanding that the figure of the uncanny, read in difference and in figuration, carries a connotation of sexual difference, what is most striking about Spivak’s analysis is that it recognizes the uncanny as the condition of a severe alienation from “the familiarity of a presumed common humanity”—that is, as a mode of figuring defamiliarization and otherness that contours, even defines, the presumed subject of “common humanity.”

Given this relationship, the uncanny exists in a *cofigurative* relation with the formation of this “common humanity” that, in Sakaguchi’s as well as other representations of pan pan girls is assumed to be the member of the national community who engages, as a reader, with the figure. In Naoki Sakai’s work, configuration is typically discussed in terms of how the unity of a language or culture is established and clarified in the process of translation. The “schema of configuration,” as a tendency in the act of translation, participates in the construction or emphasis of the polemical alignments between language and the nation or language and ethnicity that produces the problematic proclivities of nationalist discourse. Sakai therefore argues that, to

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<sup>12</sup> Spivak 2003, 74

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, 58

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*, 39



contest this tendency, translation—and, extensively, cultural analysis—must be understood in a “heterolingual mode of address” to undercut the assumption that national language, ethnicity, and national identity are homogenous or endemic to one another.<sup>15</sup> Here, I want to highlight that the schema of configuration is underscored by a desire for recognition and a possibility for identity that are, in turn, established by the heterogeneous implications of the uncanny.

Especially because the uncanny connotes a destabilization of a perception of a unitary reality and reveals it as complex and, even, unfamiliar, reading the figure of the pan pan as an interruption to the legibility of the homogeneity of Japan (racial, linguistic, ethnic, and so forth) *as well as*, as Sakaguchi describes her, its “symbol” has deconstructive implications.

The uncanny furthermore bears witness to a severing from an accepted sense of reality or normativity. In defamiliarizing the Other, however, that which is familiar, accepted, and normalized, too becomes unidentifiable and irretrievable, as if its construction were itself marked by a violating circumstance whose event has no memory (a trauma). How is it, after all, that something or someone becomes Other? For Sakaguchi, the *akarui* sense of the pan pan who left the enclosures of the home and brothel give meaning to a sense of individualism in the absence of the domestic space and, most strikingly, in the absence of *patriarchal control*. Sakaguchi’s figure is exploitative of their “out of towners” customers and the institutions that are meant to control her (such as, as I will later discuss, the hospital that treats pan pan for STDs). And her sense of *akarui* makes her visibility and inaccessibility to the demands of social and cultural structures jarring to others. And so, the figure of the pan pan also gestures to the force of a figure that is untouchable and, indeed, irretrievable even though she herself is not bound to any limitations. The uncanniness of the pan pan becomes part of a double bind within Sakaguchi’s

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<sup>15</sup> See Sakai (1997)

rhetoric: while she is an obvious reference to a retroactively threaded together fantasy about archetypes of femininity, she also embodies its loss and evacuation within the semblance of archetypal familiarity, a monstrous and glaring reminder for and of the “nation” that has been lost and, indeed, evacuated, as well as a figure for reading the presence of the Occupation.

All of the literary and cinematic representations that my analyses draw from read the pan pan girl as a figure largely because what they deal with, I argue, is a *figuration*—a representative structure that gives the illusion of a meaning and gives force to the rhetoric surrounding the object that it names but to which it does not necessarily apply. This is largely because the narrative of the pan pan girls that I present is neither developmental nor progressive and looks, instead, to disentangling the meaning-giving structures that inflect the way that she has been written and understood not only in literary and cinematic texts, but also, and most crucially, within the context of academic scholarship. Furthermore, through a rereading of the figure of the pan pan, one can understand a possibility to view the Occupation as part of a broader and much more complicated narrative about the question of sexuality and race during this period. Disparate points of contact among racial, national, and gendered borders factor into the re-construction of the Occupation when placed under the lens of this re-reading, offering a fruitful space for inquiring into the oppressive discursive and institutional frameworks of racial and sexual difference and discrimination during the postwar.

The text of the Occupation is thus haunted by the *akarui* uncanny figure of the pan pan. And taking this haunting into account, I write about this figure while cognizant of the stakes involved in discussing a *figure* of the lives and experiences of thousands of girls and women who have been silenced, re-written, or othered in ways that make it unethical to propose that this thesis performs any recovery of an experience. In fact, by illuminating, rendering *akarui* this

failure, “*Akarui Uncanny*” attempts to perform the act of paying attention to the ghostly residue of the wounds of history and its failed recoveries during the Occupation and the Cold War in East Asia.

## **The Pan Pan in the Text and Image of Postwar Japan: From Kanzaki Kiyoshi's Zoo Animals to Sakaguchi and Mizoguchi's "Enlightened" Women**

In 1949, Kanzaki Kiyoshi published an article in the women's monthly *Josei Kaizō* titled "*Ori no nai dōbutsuen*" (A Zoo Without a Cage). Kanzaki, a sociologist, anti-prostitution activist, and the head of the Japan Protection of Children's Society (*Nihon kodomo o mamorukai*) devoted much of his writing to chronicling the system of freelance prostitution that developed out of the U.S. Occupation of Japan. This particular piece describes the different groups of pan pan girls in Ueno Park, claiming to catalogue their hierarchy based on the spatial organization of the pan pan who conducted their business in the park. In Kanzaki's anthropological imagination, how the young women dressed, accessorized, and behaved among themselves and with their customers determined their status in relation to other groups. The race of their customers particularly contributed to the nomenclatures of these groups, and this, it seems, most impacted Kanzaki's understanding of this pan pan "zoo." Divided into "taxonomies," each category of pan pan earned its name according to its association with a specific race. Those who slept exclusively with foreigners were *yōpan*, contrasting the *wapan* who specialized in Japanese customers. In the former category, Kanzaki describes the distinction between sleeping with white or black foreigners, distinguishing *shiropan* ("white" pan pan) from *kuropan* ("black" pan pan). A class called *gomaisho* ("black sesame and salt") described those who catered to both black and white customers.

With peculiar, prurient intricacy, Kanzaki naturalizes these parallels between sociological and zoological writing by justifying these taxonomical distinctions not only among pan pan girls, but between pan pan and the rest of Japanese society. While the pan pan was part of the everyday, visible culture, Kanzaki insists on difference as he deploys the pan pan as a figurative

border that warded off confrontations with miscegenation by imagining a form of viable control of and ability to distinguish women who associated with foreigners from those who did not. What bothered Kanzaki was not prostitution itself, but its “uncaged” status: without regulation (or its semblance), pan pan threatened to dismantle the legitimacy of political efforts to eradicate the menaces that could stem out of sexual interactions between Japanese women and foreign men. Likewise, without cages, the pan pan undermined the notion that Japan could ever “recover” (or be “recovered”) from the trauma of its loss and its relationship to the United States during and after the Occupation. And yet, the sociologist’s beyond-scholastic obsession with forging similarities between women and animals speaks to a larger inquiry not only on caricature and representation, but also what it meant for Kanzaki and others to deal with the uncanniness of the pan pan and the failure to enforce a legitimate mode of coding difference between pan pan and other Japanese women.

Much of Kanzaki’s work is fleshed out through a paternalistic, almost hysterical, voice containing lengthy, moralizing messages about the deleterious effects of unregulated prostitution on Japanese society. The rhetoric of a disappointed father in anguish regards the pan pan as fallen, prodigal Japanese daughters who have allowed the GIs to sully and dehumanize them. In another report, “*Kiroiro benki—beigun no haisetsutoshi Tachikawa*” (Yellow Stool—A City of the Excretions of the American Military), he laments over the derogatory treatment of Japanese women who associated with Americans:

Basically, what [the GIs] are probably seeking is a family oriented atmosphere and a sense of relief in this far away, strange Japan. But even when the women

who are onlies<sup>16</sup> give up their Japanese naiveté, the GI's fellow soldiers will still say things like, "You're putting the yellow monkey in her cage."<sup>1718</sup>

His writing also frames the women who interacted with GIs as misguided agents of havoc and public disorder. Public order, in Kanzaki's writing, very directly relied upon a representation of not only the regulation of prostitution, but a semblance of control over race and sexual reproduction. The latter concern is a recurrent theme in his work and gains little attention in most writing about Kanzaki's work. Concern over race, or racism, clearly played a role in Occupation period policies, political, and literary representations concerning streetwalkers. Especially as they relate to the vitalization of nationalist sentiments in the years following the end of the war, attitudes toward interracial sexual relations between pan pan and G.I.'s framed both explicit and inexplicit social tensions. Anxiety over racial contamination was conducive to the state's campaign against the pan pan *and* its effect upon representations of the figure and this period. But how race became a locus for writing nationalist anxieties puts into question the framing of this anxiety and the framing of what would later be an allegory for shame. Through the figure of the pan pan, the discourses nationalism, patriarchy, and hysterical desires remain in perpetual visibility. Unavoidable is precisely what Sakaguchi calls *akarui* in 1947—the fragility of these discourses against the open, unshackled realities illuminated in the fact that, during the U.S. Occupation, thousands of women called pan pan girls were seen, momentarily, as threats to the re-imagining of racial and sexual relations in postwar imperialism.

In another of Kanzaki's accounts, a chapter from his publication *Yoru no Kichi* (Base At Night), "*Gaishōron*" (On Streetwalkers), the sociologist expressed that: "The street girl (*sutorīto*

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<sup>16</sup> "Only" or *onrī* refers to women who were supported by only one customer, often living with a GI as a girlfriend or wife, but paid nonetheless.

<sup>17</sup> qtd. In Chazono, 60

<sup>18</sup> All translations of Chazono's text are the author's.

*gāru*) walks in daytime, linked with American servicemen, unapologetically bold. She has no scruples about what others think. Her conduct is very different from [street prostitutes] of the past.” In both contrast and compliment to Kanzaki’s observations, Sakaguchi and the filmmaker Mizoguchi Kenji’s representations of pan pan offer a representative purview in to how popular and social discourse on pan pan girls seeped into their fictive portrayals.

### *Sakaguchi’s shizenjin*

The pan pan that Sakaguchi describes in “*Pan pan gāru*” is within an external discourse that fails to appear in the essay and excludes the politics that seem overly-apparent in Kanzaki’s reports. In this sense, there is something both subversive and attractive about Sakaguchi’s portrayal. The far less acrimoniously rendered image of the pan pan that Sakaguchi provides thus differs greatly from other representations from the late 1940’s and early 1950’s. Sakaguchi’s exclusion of, or intentional diversion from, this relationship meanwhile helps illuminate, make *akarui*, a larger argument at work, bringing to light the tension between the pan pan, as a marker for an assumed otherness and the necessity for the rhetoric of alienation and difference in her relationship to the state and its memory of the past. In the very last sentence, when Sakaguchi concludes, against the normalized prostitute/good woman comparison, that, “pan pan are the symbol of the entire nation,” he seems to open up a very different discussion about the pan pan that is totally absent from Kanzaki’s. Like other representations (historical or imaginative), Sakaguchi’s figure of the pan pan accompanies an emphasis of a kind of shock or discontent with its contemporary society, juxtaposing the normativity of national identity with the infiltration of uncanny encounters with the failed erasures of prewar and wartime institutions. Yet, figure of the

pan pan for Sakaguchi is not just a site of memory or a signifier for the Occupation, but a marker for the possibility of an amnesia that later characterized nationalist attitudes toward the past.

When we closely examine Sakaguchi's observations the pan pan are unlike the molds of the narratives that participate in the mainstream imagination of the figure as either a hyper-sexualized monster or a fallen woman. As both parody and figure, Sakaguchi's representation of the pan pan challenges the definability of the pan pan found in Kanzaki's categorical empiricism. The tensions and oppositions that his text reveals, therefore, exist apart from the paternalistic discourse of sociology and activism. Time and time again, the pan pan of Sakaguchi's writing becomes a structure against certain representations, leaving open its figuration beyond the limits of his text. The invisibility of the Occupation renders itself visible, *akarui*, in "*Panpan gāru*" precisely because of its insistence on a term that indexes the impossibilities of enclosures—physical, political, sexual, and, indeed, racial. As Sakaguchi's writing repeats the figure of the pan pan, he produces a new modality of perceiving them, *akarui*, that bring to light the article's textual gaps as the very gaps in the logic of Occupation period enclosures. It de-familiarizes (and therefore renders uncanny) the infrastructures of the new racism behind every category of difference implemented to dislocate the sexual and racial frameworks imbued in the figure of the pan pan. The pan pan's *Akarui* uncanny enables the mobility of the pan pan as a figure that resists demarcations yet at the same time is excluded from belonging. These oppositions in pan pan existence engender a figuration for an un-repression that cuts down the comforting silence and invisibility cast over regulated and enclosed spaces of sex work.

A masculinist discourse on feminine sexuality is also less explicit in Sakaguchi's impressions of the pan pan, even though some of it seeps into what may appear as judgment claims about the "other species" of prostitutes. The play on darkness and brightness, caverns and



“wide open worlds,” does imply, at least, a sense of Sakaguchi’s masculinist investment in differentiating pan pan from the more enclosed, demarcated figure of the brothel worker. But looking closely at how Sakaguchi insists upon the pan pan’s resistance to enclosures and her uncanny performance of normativity, his text opens itself to a more complicated layer: a concern for the survival of openness of the pan pan and the extinction of fantasies of enclosed performances of sexual desire and reproduction:

Their [the pan pan’s] mental health, too, is *akarui*. When I hear that the brothel girls and the pan pan should disappear, I want to say that the brothel prostitutes should go first. They’re like deformed children, physically and mentally defective. Pan pan, on the other hand, are *shizenjin* and not deformed.

The pan pan are not, Sakaguchi continuously insists, outwardly objectionable. The pan pan live off the money that they made from rich “out-of-towner” customers and refused to pay their medical bills at the Yoshiwara Hospital,<sup>19</sup> lacking a sense of social responsibility, but this, according to Sakaguchi’s claim, freed them from any burdens. They remain open, figures of border-crossing that erase the distinctions between themselves, as “bad women,” and civilians: “[T]he pan pan don’t really think of us as anything but passersby in Ginza. And, accordingly, we’ve come to think of them in a similar way—not at all as something wretched or abject.” Brothel prostitutes, meanwhile, wear the marks of social degeneration, trapped in the cavernous brothels just as they are trapped, unlike the pan pan, in a system that continuously forces them to reckon with societal and institutional rejection:

When [pan pan] get sick, they’re sent to the Yoshiwara Hospital. There, people with money pay their medical bills, but those who don’t have money don’t have to pay. The fact that brothel prostitutes pay their bills but apparently not one of

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<sup>19</sup> In the 1940s, the Yoshiwara Hospital specialized in sexual health and venereal disease control.

this district's young women (pan pan) has ever paid was something to be joked about.

The abjection that Sakaguchi aligns with the brothel prostitutes first establishes a clear boundary between the two senses of un-belonging. The derision that follows his assertions that they must disappear furthermore stems from a critical, and perhaps melancholic, stance on the brothel prostitute's relation with Occupation period institutions.

The pan pan eccentricity, *akarui* is thus read as an expression of a refusal to belong to the social mainstream while retaining, at the same time, the ability to disappear not by force, but by adoption, as un-familiar *shizenjin* who are open to social assimilation. Although the pan pan are doubtlessly victimized by the practice of "catches," their transgressive attitude toward their medical bills distinguishes them from the pessimism and roughness that Sakaguchi assigns to the brothel workers. Furthermore, the pan pan's ability to refuse economic inclusion also characterizes their transgression through their role as accumulator, but not producers, of capital:

Of course. Exactly as I imagined. These girls are especially sought and rounded up, piled onto trucks and to the hospital by the police. So it isn't surprising at all that they wouldn't feel like paying. And when they say that they don't have permanent addresses, they obviously get to show this off as the reason for dismissing their payments.

Rather than not being shackled, though, the pan pan live in thorough individualism and, furthermore, frugality. Their customers buy stuff for them, and they don't have to use their money for others either—it doesn't seem as though they ever thought of doing so. So they live, ironically enough, by using the money of others. Then again, maybe they just think that it would be stupid to use their money on someone else.

Acting from within this sense of exclusion, the figure of the pan pan disturbs an economy of categorization and, above all, an economy of convention through their role outside of state-controlled modes of labor production. And because pan pan are both homeless and of the

domestic space, they manipulate their marginality for material profit. But the writer seems to, rather than highlight this experience, focus on a rhetoric that resists this bordering. Sakaguchi remarks, with conviction, that the pan pan could thus fool anyone into thinking that they are proper young women from good families—their un-familiarity comes through the regime of cultural discourse. He sees them, positively, as more than bright, brilliant figures whose lovability (prior to their alienation) renders them incomprehensible, and thereby unlovable to Japan:

It seems that in Japan, *shizenjin* (children of nature) are never given endorsement for their intelligence, while our nation never rears into “lovable people” those who could be called wise *shizenjin*. But when the pan pan transform into *shizenjin*, who are also intelligent, Japan will become a truly cultured country. Indeed, pan pan are the symbol of the entire nation.

The rejection of this brilliance does not, however, delimit the pan pan from continuously infiltrating domestic spaces (despite their having no homes). They fracture demarcations, instilling a sense of clarity, a resistance to obscurity and forgetfulness and occlusion, that doubles into a representation—albeit, possibly an ironic one—of Japan.

Like the pan pan, the essay itself becomes something akin to *akarui*, an opportunity for a consideration of an image, icon, or word as *in excess* of what it conceals. The multiplicity of meanings and connotations that the term *akarui* carries furthermore allows, in its liminality and heterogeneity, for the return of a heavily repressed discourse on sexuality and sexual labor during the Occupation that seems at once erased and strategically resurrected within Sakaguchi’s text. The figure of the pan pan points to a psychic element of the Occupation that disturbs the category of “Japan” as an epithet for a homogenized and transparent political, ethnic, and historical entity. Rather, the “nation,” for Sakaguchi, symbolized through these paradoxical

figures of memory and erasure, is at odds with the impossibility to forget or “get over” its obscured past—an impossibility embodied in the persistence of the “cavernous brothels” that allude to a form of institutionalized military prostitution that has been continuous from the wartime into the Occupation. The pan pan girls thus embody the uncanny and outwardly tendency of the attempt and failure to forget. In other words, the *akarui* uncanny of the pan pan girls insinuates a refusal to obfuscate the sexual and racial tensions of the scene of the Occupation that have—since the 1950’s and, as I will elaborate, the beginning of the postwar discipline of “Japanese Studies” in the United States and its projections onto the image of Japan—been rendered unfamiliar.

The pan pan *akarui*, though a signifier for freshness, newness, and brightness, generates moments of anxiety and uncertainty that nuance the never-realizable fantasy of encounter. In his essay, Sakaguchi addresses fears of getting called out by pan pan in the middle of the street—fears that never come to full fruition, but are defined, nevertheless, through the masculine psyche. “[I]t does not seem like us poor Tokyoites have to worry about getting called out by pan pan girls,” Sakaguchi writes, repeatedly highlighting that the pan pan, at first sight, seem like nothing more than passersby and yet *at the same time* are radically unlike the rest of society. The anxiety that a Tokyoite might get called out is not only unfounded, but ties to latent fears of alterity, and, above all, may connect to the stigma of not only sex work, but also, and perhaps more worryingly, sex work that is seen as a producer of alterity through the pan pan’s obvious connection to the visibility of miscegenation during the Occupation. Like the uncanny, the condition of *akarui* seems to obviously have reference to female sexuality and serves as a metaphor for the fear of castration. *Akarui*, however, does not delimit the pan pan to customary

metaphors for femininity while implicitly playing a deconstructive role in Sakaguchi's understanding of the narrative of Japan in the postwar.

When Sakaguchi argues that the pan pan, unlike other so-called "species" of sex workers must be preserved, then, does he also argue against the amnesiac attitude toward the visible and undeniable reality of miscegenation? Putting Sakaguchi's essay in dialogue with the discourse on racial purity and "Japaneseness" put forth by the Japanese government and "specialists" of "Japanese Studies" alike may, in fact, offer an even more productive possibility for the deconstructive quality of the *akarui* uncanny. Preserving such a figure could mean, ultimately, that the pan pan girl represents the unavoidable return of not only the constant image of the Occupation, but also the experience of its trauma as, first and foremost, the disappeared possibility for discourse on a national body that has and remains contradictory to its projections of the image of Japan as racially pure. Reading through the traumatic structures of the text further denotes the revelation of a process of erasure, substitution, and mediation that creates the conditions for the national community. But because the figure of the pan pan contests racial purity and calls into question the validity of the nation-state and the discourse of its homogeneity and inclusivity, it also forces a confrontation with the reality that this community is, in large part, transformed through its necessity for the Otherness of the pan pan—its necessary preservation. The pan pan girl may, indeed, be a "symbol of the entire nation" insofar as she mirrors and therefore reveals it as a mere construction and, therefore, a fantasy. Yet, insofar as the pan pan is partial, fragmented, and fractured, because of her configurative relation to the nation, the absence of the pan pan as a subject also denotes the absence of the nation as a totality. What Sakaguchi's representation points to is the ability to read the pan pan as a testament to the abstraction of the image of the nation when placed in relation with the questions of sexuality and race. The future

legibility of *akarui* and its afterlife makes possible a reading of that which has been concealed, written over, and rendered uncanny.

*Mizoguchi's Women of the Night*

Kanzaki and Sakaguchi's essays allow for understanding the figure of the pan pan girl from the vantage points of two critical observations. These two perspectives, for a large part, helped further a reading of Sakaguchi's terming of *akarui* and its conceptualization through the Freudian uncanny—a figure of concealment that can no longer be concealed. Looking forward, I shift my focus to another inquiry regarding the *akarui* uncanny: how does a woman become a both defamiliarized and a marker for a collective or individual shame?

The figure of the pan pan in Mizoguchi's *Yoru no Onnatachi* (Women of the Night, 1948),<sup>20</sup> is one imbricated in a complex and brutal relationship with diaspora, colonialism, and sexual violence. Throughout, the discord between the two central characters, Fusako and her estranged sister Natsuko, is pronounced by the exploitative apparatus of the state under Occupation, wherein the precarity of women is such that they are more easily oppressed by extra-legal industries (the black market, prostitution, and drug trafficking, among some), and so, unrelentingly vulnerable to suffering. What Mizoguchi's camera captures is thus more than a figure of a live haunting—of a discourse of “Others” living among “us” that often typifies other representations of pan pan—but an account of the layers of women's experiences saturated in the layers of patriarchal ideology.

In the concluding scene of *Yoru no Onnatachi*, the pan pan girls clearly demarcate their territory within the geography of immediate postwar Osaka:

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<sup>20</sup> Mizoguchi adapted this 1948 film from Hisaita Eijiro's 1947 novel, *Josei matsuri*.

“What do you think you’re doing?”

“This is our territory!”

Set amid the rubble of a bombed church, this drawn out, violent sequence begins with a flood of garishly dressed, cigarette-smoking women chasing after a younger prostitute, Kimiko, and moments before, kicking out a young man in a bowler hat under the accusation that he thought he could “make fools” out of them (*baka ni suru*). The violent moment ends in the man’s swift exit from the scope of Mizoguchi’s characteristic long take, as if he disappears, buried amid the rubble while the women continue hazing the other intruder. Kimiko’s crime, under the order set by streetwalkers in the dilapidated urban social scene, was that she had trespassed onto the territory of another group of streetwalkers and was, under these laws, subject to brutalization. In a very Derridian sense, violence here founds and reinstates pan pan law. The territory in question the very pile of rubble and debris on which they stand, with only few edifices erect, but nevertheless an area of contestation and, soon, sexualized violence. (Here, under the sinful behaviors of fallen women, lie the remains of the devastated masculine ego that disappeared seconds before).

Throughout the film, Kimiko is portrayed, like the pan pan of Sakaguchi’s essay, ran away from home in search of a better lifestyle only to find herself sexually exploited and betrayed by the first man whom she meets when arriving to Osaka. But what is most shocking about the end of this scene is that it heralds the return of Fusako, who is now an older pan pan hardened by her experiences as an impoverished widow who suffers throughout the bulk of the film from the deaths of her husband and infant son, betrayal by a lover, and many other forms of abandonment and sacrifice. Played by Tanaka Kinuyo (who collaborated with Mizoguchi as

the archetype of a fallen woman in numerous films), Fusako steps into the dreary and brutal scene and pleads to take on the younger woman's punishment as a martyr for the other pan pan girls' crimes. In the final tableau, the camera follows Tanaka's transformative movements from the light that brightly illuminates her face and shoulders and into the shadows behind a tall stained glass window. Then, tilting upward, its focus gradually glides up a large, fragmented wall, finally zooming out to reveal the image of the Virgin Mary. Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony" punctuates the sobriety of the scene like a booming accusation, clarifying the same accusative melody that accompanies the opening credits.

As the *mis-en-scène* unfolds, on looking pan pan hold one another and cry while bearing witness to Fusako's physical trauma—a reflection of her mental and emotional suffering that recapitulates her transformations throughout the film. The women continue to cry and mournfully vow to leave their lifestyle ("go straight"); the iconography here institutes the film's multiple implications. Throughout the plot, the concept of national shame and concern for the members of the national community remains on a relatively accessible level through their embodiments in cultural and institutional constructs. While hospitals, the police, and the innumerable (and not entirely visible) structures that dominate over the conditions of sexual health participate in the development of Mizoguchi's protagonists. Here, however, the religious iconography (which, in Mizoguchi's films often connotes a call for morality) acts as a moment for his "*j'accuse*" towards the never quite defined entities that effected the dilapidation of the women's morality and purity.

Although Mizoguchi himself was not a Christian, his turn to Buddhism in the late 1950's and a general interest in religious imagery, Donald Richie discusses, serves in his films as a



method for representing redemption.<sup>21</sup> At the same time, given the historical and cultural frameworks that this film explores, Christian iconography may also operate on a more nuanced register. What Mizoguchi's camera demonstrates in this final scene is an icon that has, in the history of both the formation of Japan as a nation and the greater context of colonialism, been associated with the imposition of European imperialism and its ties to forms of gendered, racial, and sexual aggressions. Christian iconography, in tandem with its moral implications, played a heavy role in the mechanisms of oppression and control in the rise of modern colonialism. *The Madonna and the Child* on the fully intact stained glass window could therefore denote the rigidity of these modes of oppression and the struggles that women, like Fusako and the other pan pan, endure under U.S. Occupation. The reading of this iconography, however, is beyond the context that is explicitly set forth. Nevertheless, it unveils a paradoxical juncture in Mizoguchi's text through the question of this divisive possibility of interpretation—an aporia that I read as a point of contact between Mizoguchi's film and Sakaguchi's essay that manifests as and exposes the operative dimensions of the *akarui* uncanny. From within this context, the moment and movement of revelation, when light brightly strikes Tanaka's face and upper body as she reacts to brutalization, illuminates, uncannily, the hypocrisy of the gaze that moralizes the image of the freelance sex worker.

But Mizoguchi's work neither denies nor eludes to the presence of sex work during the Occupation; it does not, furthermore, dignify society with the beneficial doubt that it was somehow blind to pan pan activity. The pan pan, as a figure, is pervasive and permeates public spaces, even as social, religious, academic, and medical institutions and their constructs attempt to physically contain or quarantine her. Yet, from the beginning of *Yoru no onnatachi*, the

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<sup>21</sup> See Richie (2005; 2001)

eponymous “women of the night” in question seem irrevocably condemned to silence. Condemned, neither because of the film’s predictability nor its use of a sinister rendition of Beethoven’s “Fifth,” but because the film, which was one of Mizoguchi’s postwar portrayals of prostitution, centers around a figure already so marginalized that it cannot do without the imprints of masculine shame etched into the trajectory of a woman’s story. This act of silencing does not emerge out of Mizoguchi’s personal history with a fraternal-turned-paternalistic fixation on representing and repeating the figure of the prostitute—though the topic of Mizoguchi’s traumatic re-representations does serve as a venue for inquiry for some. Rather, the violent silencing employs the very rhetorical strategies by which an attempt to reveal the trauma of the postwar Japanese state as collective can come at the expense of a double, or triple, dislocation of the female subject in order to make sense out of the metaphorically downtrodden and fragmented, bombed, national masculine ego. What the image of the *Madonna* reveals is not, in fact, the empowerment of a feminine figure, for even the Madonna, the mother of Christ, herself has no mode of self-representation in the canonical corpus of Biblical texts. *The Book of Mary* is a nonexistent apocryphal book whose absence signifies the necessity of representation in the absence of a woman’s voice.<sup>22</sup> Like the women of Mizoguchi’s film and many other representations of pan pan girls, the Virgin Mary is thus another figure of a silence that illuminates the conditions of becoming and being used as a configrative schema for the trajectory of masculine injury. The church and erect image of the Madonna thereby evidence a fantasy of traumatic destruction. Yes, the film does hold a clear accusation towards the conditions of postwar Japan and the proliferation of unregulated sex work, going so far as to vilify the cringe-inducing method of “catches” (*kyachi*)—the term used to describe state-sanctioned practice of

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<sup>22</sup> Although an apocryphon accredited to “Mary” has been, according to Wikipedia’s sources, surfaced, it is neither part of the canon of apocryphal texts nor accredited specifically as the work of Jesus’s mother.

police brutality and compulsory venereal disease examination.<sup>23</sup> Still, it is not the bodies of the women, as either metaphors or sobering representations, that receive Mizoguchi's compassion. What the camera seeks, ultimately, is the image of the impossible restoration of the silent virgin mother as transparent, evocative, and redemptive.

To some degree, *Yoru no onnatachi* is an attempt at a more sympathetic portrayal of pan pan than that in either Kanzaki's "*Ori no nai dōbutsuen*" or Sakaguchi's "*Pan pan gāru*." Kanzaki very openly criticized the existence and behavior of pan pan girls, but for Sakaguchi, the figure takes the part of a metaphor for Japanese hypocrisy, but, at the same time, amplifies his sense of exclusion from the world that is only accessible to the pan pan girls. Yet, *Yoru no onnatachi* exposes two visions of the objects of both essays: the garishly dressed, impossible to miss pan pan that flagrantly flaunt their activities and "have no care in the world," and, more subtly, the vision of the military prostitute sans the military that exhibits a defamiliarization from what was once familiar and *Heimlich*, becoming a metaphor for the anxiety and estrangement of the uncanny metropolis. This offers yet another point of entry into the relationship between the pan pan *akarui*-ness and the Freudian uncanny, particularly through Mizoguchi's relational, and, I will discuss, *translational* positioning of urban space, postwar violence, and the figure of the pan pan.

### **Pan pan and the Figure of Translation**

In his 2014 text, "The Figure of Translation: Translation as Filter?", Naoki Sakai questions the possibility of representing translation as a filter. "The filter indicates," he writes, "a site where there is a curtain or barrier as obstacle." The obstacle enters into the imagination as

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<sup>23</sup> See Chazono (2014) for a detailed discussion on *kyachi* in *Pan pan to wa dare na no ka?*

“something that hinders movement, even if it is full of holes or permeable.” Whatever cannot pass through accumulates within the filter and immobilizes, Sakai explains:

As a result, the impermeable objects that previously circulated freely are held in place at the site of the filter, and prevented from slipping through the opposite side. This is the metaphor that first emerges when we intertwine the terms “translation” and “filter.”<sup>24</sup>

Obviously, the figure of the pan pan and the figure of translation share few obvious commonalities. And yet, the image evoked by this metaphor of the “filter” in conjunction to “translation” here offers an entryway into my discussion of the figure of the pan pan. As I have clarified, the pan pan finds representation in literature not through testimony, but through entering into a fragmented configuration, a schema, that leaves behind certain immobilized elements. In the context of my analysis, this filter through which representation becomes possible is itself the figure of the pan pan. The figure of the pan pan reveals the displacement of previously disparate and bordered bodies as they come into representation through one figure. That figure simultaneously represents those bodies in relation to one another and demonstrates the limits of their total representation; the figure of the pan pan, in this way, plays a translational role. But of what?

Representations of pan pan do not only enter into literary representation as symbols for the trajectory of the plight of Japanese masculine respectability as images of U.S. imperial complicity. Although pan pan girls do clearly delineate colonial relations and a structure of sexual desire within colonial power dynamics, they, at the same time, may also undermine the silences that surround the experiences of women and the roles that women played (voluntarily or

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<sup>24</sup> Sakai 2014, 7

otherwise) during the transition of one colonial regime (Japanese imperialism) to another (U.S. Military Occupation). *Yoru no onnatachi* already puts forth this translational narrative in the relationship between Fusako and her younger, estranged sister Natsuko. Natsuko, who is shown as vibrant and worldly works as a hostess in a dance hall at the beginning of the film, had lived in colonial Korea with her and Fusako's parents. She quickly moves in with Fusako, now an employee at her husband's former company and in a relationship with her boss. But the happy family reunion lasts only briefly; Natsuko drinks herself to a stupor on a daily basis and, soon, Fusako begins to suspect that her boss has become involved with her sister as well. Her suspicions are eventually confirmed upon her walking in on the two amid the wake of a sexual liaison; her fight with Natsuko reveals that Fusako's boss had not only been cheating on her, but had also been using Fusako to sell illicit drugs.

One of the most important and, indeed, tragic conflicts develops in the scene that follows, when Natsuko confesses that, as a teenager, she had been raped by an imperial army soldier:

FUSAKO: Natsuko, what are you doing?

NATSUKO: Nothing.

FUSAKO: You can't be so reckless. Since mother and father are gone, I have to look after you—you know that.

NATSUKO: There's no hope for me. I was raped during the evacuation [pause]. I wished I was dead so many times. Only the hope of being happy when I got back here kept me going. They should have just sold me off to somebody.<sup>25</sup>

Where space for sisterly empathy and compassion may have existed, another tragedy takes hold over the strained relationship. Natsuko's shame and refusal of her sister's compassion is followed by Fusako's turn to the streets and Natsuko's further decline into an alcoholic depression punctuated by Kiriyama's abuse. When Fusako returns, now herself a prostitute

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<sup>25</sup> Translation of the scene is transcribed from the Criterion Collection edition's subtitles.

toughened by the experience of betrayal, Natsuko is pregnant, syphilitic, and moments away from death.

While moments of compassion between individual female characters intersperse the brutality of their experiences, it is not their coming together in solidarity but, rather, their often violent encounters with one another, that makes possible his approach to the figure of the pan pan. Amidst the paternalistic and patronizing rhetoric that envelops the narrative of *Yoru no onnatachi* is the revelation that the figure of the pan pan, to come into representation, resists entry into a community (a nation) and, likewise, the community resists her incorporation. The economic and societal positioning of the pan pan, in this framework, makes uncertain the possibility of her incorporation into the normative mainstream.

This ambivalence may resonate with Giorgio Agamben's interpretation of the "enigmatic figure" of the *homo sacer*.<sup>26</sup> In this representation (as well as others), pan pan pan as the "sacred life" (*homo sacer*) whose symbolic status heralds the unpunishability of her killing (symbolic or otherwise) and the impossibility of her sacrifice. She is, in other words, simultaneously sacred and criminal. Like the pan pan, expelled from a time when the Japanese government legally regulated prostitution as a "sacrifice" for the *homo sacer* cannot be sacrificed. In fact, the divinity of the *homo sacer* is overtly incorporated by the final scene, where the camera juxtaposes the Madonna and Child with Fusako; instead of interpreting her plight as social or economic, Mizoguchi's text displaces the sociopolitical structures that engendered her plight onto "a zone prior to the distinction between sacred and profane, religious and juridical."<sup>27</sup> On the one hand, through Agamben's interpretation, this means that the contradictory character of the pan pan itself allows for a revealing of an "originary political structure" that emerges from

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<sup>26</sup> Agamben 1998, 71

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, 74

the ambivalence of her figuration. On the other hand, this also means that the lens of difference through which the pan pan is approached uncovers a continuity between the hegemonic discourses and structures that engender the possibility of her representation. The “zone” that precedes difference remains but a traumatic trace that, too, finds a mode of figuration, a schematization, in translation.

Because of her in-betweenness, the pan pan thus is both familiar and defamiliarized from both contexts, an *akarui* uncanny schema that is constantly expelled out of and resists homogenizing contexts while immobilizing and re-figuring their heterogeneous qualities. Understanding the pan pan as a figure of such transformative mechanisms, including, perhaps, as a figure of heterolingual translation, not only takes into account the often disavowed heterogeneity of the figure, but sees her as a mode of addressing the impossibility of the schema as a bifurcated and bifurcating metaphor for colonial/colonized male desire, where the field of sexual reproduction remains an inaccessible void. Further, the figure of the pan pan in Mizoguchi’s film gives testimony to the multiple layers of women’s exploitation within the transition of colonial dynamics, wherein the representation of U.S. neo-imperialism cannot, for instance, disavow the continuity of Japanese colonial violence in the postwar.

According to Sakai, the stigma of the regime of translation derives from the model of seeing translation as a metaphor for filtering the code of one language into the code of another to create a symbiotic relationship between language and culture. As with the idea that internationality depends on the filtering of linguistic or cultural difference or to sustain relations between two supposedly homogenous nationalities, the regime of translation assumes the rhetoric of impenetrability without “filter,” and the organic relation between language and nation. Sakai repeatedly refutes this stigma of the regime of translation, which, while needing historization,

that historicization of the “homolingual” mode of address allows for a turn “towards thinking of translation as ‘heterolingual address’”:

The “homolingual address” derives its legitimacy from the vision of the modern international world as a juxtaposition of state sovereignties as well as the reciprocal recognition among nation-states. Of course, the international world and the nation state offer mutual reinforcement and form a system of complicity. In order to unravel this traditional view of translation and recombine the tropes of translation towards a forum for the elucidation of sociality, the trope of “translation as filter” provides us with an appropriate thematic.<sup>28</sup>

“Translation,” Sakai clarified in a December 2015 class lecture on the topic, “is needed at the locale of discontinuity.” Discontinuity, he elaborated, did not involve the figure of a gap or cut or border, *per se*, but represented a point of nonsense<sup>29</sup>—a point wherein the discourse of one entity cannot be reproduced within the discourse of another, requiring the representation of translation. This representation of translation exceeds the domain of language (as the spatial demarcations set on national languages exist only through the history of the nationalization of the state); the representation is thereby a mediation of the assumption that one language can exist completely exterior to another.<sup>30</sup> And yet translation occurs, Sakai states in “The figure of translation,” beyond the limitations of cultural difference and beyond a mode of asserting anthropological difference through the territorialization of the homolingual address:

Precisely in this sense, translation operates by exceeding the narrow meaning of language. A novel is translated into film, just as a political idea can be translated into action. A human being’s creative capacity can be translated into capital, their desires translated into dreams, their aspirations translated into seats in parliament. Translation passes through and circulates in intervals of different instances of meaning, threading together discontinuous contexts. As a consequence,

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<sup>28</sup> Sakai 2014, 2

<sup>29</sup> Wherein  $x = 0$ , for instance (which is, not ironically, the formula for the unconscious for Lacan).

<sup>30</sup> From lecture notes dated December 3, 2015



translation is conceived of as something that is particularly metaphorical within the metaphor and thus often referred to as “the metaphor of metaphor.”<sup>31</sup>

The figure of the pan pan, I want to propose, also undermines the regime of translation, the stigma of the homolingual address within modes of reading. Her representation signals the presence of exchanges that exceed homogenous racial, economic, and gender relations; thus, the figure of the pan pan, as a figure of polyvariance and precarity, makes possible the undoing of the “homogeneous empty time” that Benedict Anderson identified as a nation and that strongly connects to the problem of the regime of translation. In terms of sexual politics, the fraternal etiquette with which internationality, a schema of translation, creates the conditions by which sexual access to women establishes a mode of repeating homosocial, patriarchal regimes. And these constructions may, in connection to the figure of translation, become easier to detect in the textual and visual legacy of the Occupation and the scenes that bear witness to and translate it within literature and, specifically, literary representations of military sex work in the scene of the Occupation. The romanesque manner in which the fantasy of the accessible woman transformed into a trope in postwar literary currents as a schema for the trajectory of trauma repeats and translates—perhaps inadvertently—beyond the scope of temporal, spatial, or linguistic limitations. I want to, therefore, create the possibility to engage with the question of translation in relation to the figure of the pan pan and vice-versa.

If translation, against the stigma of the regime of translation and the homolingual address, can be something “particularly metaphorical” as well as something very structurally close to what Spivak calls “the subaltern” (as Sakai discusses), can translation also become a method of relation for, not the figure, but the pan pan girl as a subject? Up until now, very few studies

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<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*, 1

demonstrate significant consideration or attempt to create connections between the experiences of military base prostitution in constellation with the military bases that erected American imperialism during the Cold War. Even though the figure of the pan pan has become a sort of homogenized, reified icon for a masculine modality of self-identification, the pan pan herself remained outside of recognition. A similarity exists, therefore, between the pan pan and the subaltern that may, in further theorization of the heterolingual mode of translation, take into account her correspondence to a more multiplied, heterotopic field of inquiry that responds to the demands set forth by the work translation, transitions, transformations that may emerge from within the rubble of Area Studies.

### **Race as Pure as Fiction, or Why Race and Sex**

Any study on the figure of the pan pan must involve an encounter with the limits of the view that a concern about racial purity remained continuous throughout prewar and postwar Japan. Therefore, it must thus involve and encounter with the limits of traditional Area Studies. The pan pan is, after all, a figure that reveals the edges of a discourse on Japanese ethnonationalism in the moment that this discourse comes into contact with the existence of the transpacific and transnational reality that heralded the emergence of pan pan girls and other figures of military sex work throughout East Asia during and after the Cold War.

The Occupation helped inaugurate a new form of xenophobia that constituted patriarchal ethnonationalism in supplement to the loss and absence of Japan's national state sovereignty. In tandem, the pan pan girl became a metaphor of the externalization of this absence and a scapegoat for the anxiety and shame constructed around the moralization of miscegenation and interracial sexual relations. The work of what Étienne Balibar calls new racism is, in fact, embedded into the fantasy of Japan and the idea of Japanese-ness that traditional Area Studies reproduced in the decades following the end of the Asia-Pacific War. The creation of this fantasy, if one can talk about beginnings or a kind of historical tracing of new discourses in postwar Japan, can be read in the censorship of anti-racist sociological studies that emerged out of imperial ideology.

Contrary to the mainstream narrative that Imperial Japan was, in some way, an Asian equivalent to the situation in Nazi Germany, in the 1940's, less than half a decade before the beginning of the Occupation, the work of sociologists like Takada Yasuma and Shinmei Masamichi—two ideologues of Tōjō Hideki—heavily criticized the function of racism in the colonial and national ideologies of Western Europe and the United States—which, had, at the time, policies that endorsed the segregation of white Americans from non-whites. Takada's *Minzokuron* (Theory of the Nation), for instance, demonstrates the crucial role that anti-ethnonationalist and pro-racial integrationist rhetoric played in the configuration of Japanese imperial ideology. Of course, in practice, Japanese imperialism was less than integrational. In fact, the purpose of anti-racist discourse was to suppress ethnocentric nationalist movements and coalitions in Japan's colonies, according to Takada, because of the importance of sustaining and building a State-centric nationalism that undermined the logic of creating and identifying with communities based on racial or ethnic ties. The State, the carrier of the mechanism of total

society (a term that Takada borrowed from German sociology), served as a managing apparatus—an overarching function operating upon the accepted heterogeneous population of the Empire. Shinmei Masamichi's theoretically rich work, *Jinshu to Shakai* (Race and Society), meanwhile heavily censured and debunked the logic of Nazi racism. While the category of race itself was not thoroughly deconstructed in Shinmei's writing, his work demonstrates a clear interest in tracing the gradual invention of racial hierarchies based on retrospective readings of something akin to a "race struggle" in Western European aristocratic history and Christian U.S. American identification with Western European ethnic identity.

Shinmei's critical work consults the writings of the Segonde Empire pro-monarchy novelist, poet, and member of the Asian Society of Paris, Joseph Arthur Comte de Gobineau, credited for the authorship of *An Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races* (1854). Though Gobineau was not aristocrat himself, he called himself a count and wrote his extensive treaty on the superiority of aristocratic racial lineage and the inferiority of non-white or mixed peoples. The notion of racial inferiority emerges in Gobineau's logic, according to Shinmei, out of the perceived inheritance of physical and psychological traits that make one race differ from another.<sup>32</sup> This claim of empirical inferiority of non-white peoples to those of "Caucasian" origins provides, for Shinmei, the grounds for his critique on European racism. The evidence of the fantasy of race arises, Shinmei discusses, in the history of Gobineau's text itself; when it was translated in to English for U.S. distribution—where the novelist's work gained popularity among advocates for slavery in the late nineteenth century—a very large part about the mixed racial make up of Americans and their genetic inferiority was edited out. Shinmei's writing uncovers, perhaps unknowingly, the root of racism as a legacy of a white supremacist fantasy.

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<sup>32</sup> Shinmei 1980, 125-127

More specifically, he points out that the fear of the notion of miscegenation is a fabrication of white supremacy, and, implicitly, underscores that the obsession with race historically originated from the inferiority complex and anxieties of a non-aristocratic class.<sup>33</sup> The legacy of Gobineau's text and the disappearance of a discourse on U.S. American miscegenated heritage indicate that the legacy of the hegemony of white supremacy in the United States and its inheritance in the twentieth century are rooted in the active denial of the miscegenation of the non-elite. And so, the crisis of maintaining pretense becomes, I will argue, the operative function of what is often read as a "crisis of masculinity" in texts that discuss miscegenation and interracial relations as "threats."

But who held responsibility for the repeated assertion that, in Japan and Japanese politics, an originary and historically-salient obsession with racial cleansing and purity propelled public policy since long before the U.S. government set up its military headquarters? I ask this because, despite the canonization of this idea, a disconnection—a logical gap—persists in the narrative. Decades after Shinmei and Takada's interventions, Michel Foucault analyzed war as a domain that propagated the notion of a "race struggle," and demonstrated that race itself continuously shifts and has no historical or scientific foundation. Foucault, who also refers to Gobineau, also sees an apparent genealogy in racism within the moment of the introduction of the nation in the eighteenth century, yet the discourse of the race war and of racism is not definitive and therefore easily manipulated. Indeed, the arbitrariness of the category and notion of race carries with it an important relationship between its definition and the relations of biopower that later, in the transformation of the liberal state, translate into *biopolitics*.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*, 128

<sup>34</sup> Foucault coined the terms "biopolitics" and "biopolitical" (after "biopower") to describe the structures and mechanisms by which a governmental regime controls and disciplines its populations. In *The Birth of Biopolitics*, Foucault defines it as "a governmental regime called liberealism" wherein technologies of power come to create

The figure of the pan pan faces such a complicated, and too-commonly overlooked, arrangement of such structures of biopower during Occupation that it is easy to set aside the fact that she coincides to another array of historical demands. And, among this array, is an amnesiac attitude toward her relationship to the evolution of racial codes during the Occupation. A general acceptance is cast over the repeated “covering up” of the written history of a discourse that was anti-racist and uncritical of miscegenation. Postwar history and history that recalls an object called “Japan” since the postwar operates under the general acceptance of academics and others involved in the perpetuation of its discourse. Meanwhile, the conversations that we have, as academics and individuals partaking in the reproduction of narratives, often occlude a thorough unpacking of how we came to the conclusion that, for instance, Japan is obsessed with ethnic purity, or that Japanese history is, in essence, ethnonationalist, or that Japan itself simply *is*. More dangerous, still, are the reiterations of a narrative that the Occupation resulted from U.S. American benevolence and U.S. anti-colonial efforts to transform Japan into a liberal and human rights-accepting state.<sup>35</sup> In keeping with continuing efforts to contest the credibility of essentialist historical narratives, this thesis is a gesture toward engaging with alternative, trans-pacific modes of envisaging the possibility of historical justice through a transnational, transpacific method of discursive analysis.

Cathy Caruth’s work on the language of trauma is instructive in this task because of its resonance with the idea of postcoloniality as a position of bearing witness and testimony. Caruth

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conditions for the emergence of a subjective relationship to the state and enforces hegemonic relations of power. See Foucault (2008)

<sup>35</sup> Lisa Yoneyama’s 2016 publication, *Cold War Ruins*, attends to this problem effectively: “The narrative recounts that Japan before the war was a nation lagging in its modern development, and that it failed to cultivate its latent potential to embrace liberal ideals until it was vanquished and then reborn under U.S. ‘benevolent supremacy’... [A]rea studies’ anthropological knowledge about Japan produced during the transwar decade gave academic credibility to its dimension of the ‘good war’ narrative. In the ‘good war’ narrative, Japan was to be racially rehabilitated as a biopolitical space for American governmentality.” (21)

characterizes trauma as “the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available.” The reality, delayed in the time of trauma, appears belatedly and “cannot be linked only to what is known, but also to what remains unknown in our very actions and our language.”<sup>36</sup> If we can call the field of Japanese Studies as a field radically charged with the language of trauma, the figure of the pan pan, especially as a referent to the incommensurability of racial and colonial undertones in the language of Area Studies, can be read as crying out to tell of the unavailable truths of the violent history that she represents. Racial discrimination, after all, manifests prominently in the scene of sexual relations between what are perceived as different races and, as a result, the pan pan often attracted the fantasies, sometimes dangerous sometimes productive, of both U.S. American and Japanese civilians alike. Could we not, then, paraphrasing Caruth’s language, say that Sakaguchi’s essay and other literary and cinematic productions *as well as* scholarly representations bear witness to the birth of new racial codes and new racisms of the postwar? This witnessing is not a reclaiming, but, rather, a transference of the evidence of a disappearance.<sup>37</sup> The act of testimony in and as literature and representation, in this sense, assists in inquiring into the possibility of reading the erasure of racial and sexual traumas and the violence within the scene of the Occupation as they turn to a future that calls to memory the continuity of colonial violence of the past. At the site of the traumatic language of these texts and the appropriation of trauma and its discourse is the memory and legacy of the erasures and censors of the Occupation—its often disavowed postcolonial entanglements.

### Considering Empire: The Pan Pan in Academic Discourse

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<sup>36</sup> Caruth 1996, 4

<sup>37</sup> Caruth 2013, xi

The claim that pan pan girls symbolized the trauma and humiliation of Japanese defeat appears in both English and Japanese historical narratives. Most famously, John Dower's *Embracing Defeat* not only tremendously inspired the analysis of a kind of spectator-object relationship between civilians and pan pan during the postwar, but also contributes to the perpetuation of this claim within North American scholarship.<sup>38</sup> And while this view has, to some extent, encouraged scholars of postwar Japan to explore issues surrounding regulated and unregulated sex work in Occupied Japan, parts of its discourse rarely, if at all, touch upon the legibility of a problematic logic that embeds itself into the idea that pan pan symbolize or are symbols for the experience of an entire nation. The reading of collective trauma as the experience of a nation and the logic for nationalist sentimentality does not see trauma as belonging to every person within the national community who has citizenship. Rather, it identifies the subject of trauma as a male national gaze. From this stems a form of nationalism that explicitly deals with the formation and stability of the national male subject, who is always the male subject of the dominant racial and economic class within the state. The nationalist sentiment furnished during the Occupation of Japan, however, operates within the logic of a double bind that characterizes the transformation of modern nationalism from the pre-war and war periods into the postwar period.

In modern colonialism, a patriarchal order sets into motion a system of regulation over sexual access to women. In the case of the Occupation of Japan, the state created the Recreation and Amusement Association as a preventative institution not for resolving women's fears of sexual assault, but for resolving the anxiety of the male members of the local, national

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<sup>38</sup> These works include but are not limited to the following: Kovner, Sarah. *Occupying Power: Sexworkers and Servicemen in Postwar Japan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012. Takeuchi, Michiko. "Pan Pan Girls' Performing and Resisting Neocolonialism(s) in the Pacific Theater: U.S. Military Prostitution in Occupied Japan (1945-1952)." *Over There: Living with U.S. Military Empire*, eds. Maria Höhn and Seungsook Moon. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010; Norma, Caroline. "A Past Re-Imagined from the Geisha: Saviour of the 1950's Japanese Sex Industry." *Traffic*, Vol. 10.



community through the regulation of sexual access to local women. The implementation of such policies that aimed to heavily regulate the bodies that Allied servicemen could access as well as those that remained restricted to local men thus demonstrate how Pax Americana deliberately operated as an explicitly imperial order in the immediate postwar. The transition from this imperialism to “global recovery” (or, in other words, the ascendance of neoimperial global capitalist state that took the place of the would-be U.S. colony) appears clearly in the trajectory of the figure of the pan pan in literature and reveals, as metaphor, the space of the incommensurability between the two regimes as an event of translation.

As mentioned, the dissolution of the RAA by the end of 1946 generated conditions by which now illegal, unregulated prostitutes could freely participate in the consumption and production of capital (as sex). The discontinuity of a system by which sexual access to women was figured within the realm of a homosocial contract between two homogenized masculinities effected anxiety toward the need to reestablish a new form of dislocating feminine sexual experience onto the realm of aesthetic representation in literature and film. As evidenced in Dower’s work, this mode of dislocating the figure of the pan pan through textual mediation is not limited to the production and consumption of texts written in Japanese, for Japanese audiences. Dower, and the texts that cite his portrait of the pan pan, does not elaborate on the sexist and explicitly racist undertones of the appropriation of the pan pan as a nationalized object or icon. Nor does he give attention to the “cutting off” (castration) of masculine agency in the face of the visibility of a free-floating, capitalist enterprise that permeated urban spaces during the Occupation or to the anxious necessity to foreclose the continuity of the capitalist drive in the trans-national exchanges and confluences occurring in the non-demarcated site of the figure of

the streetwalker. The scene that Dower fixates upon in the chapter “Cultures of Defeat” is rather one that fails to problematize the stereotypical portrayal of the pan pan girls:

Like the accomplished courtesans of the past, the panpan also possessed special talents—most notably, in their case, the ability to communicate in a polyglot form of English, a hybrid mix of hooker’s Japanese and the GI’s native tongue that was humorously identified as “panglish.” Getting along in this second language, broken or not, was a skill highly valued in post-surrender Japan—hundreds of thousands of men were also struggling to survive by dealing with the conqueror in the conqueror’s tongue (*their* pidgin English was sometimes laughed off as “SCAPanese”).<sup>39</sup>

Dower begins this paragraph by delineating the characteristics that helped pan pan succeed and survive amid the impoverished backdrop of immediate post-war Japan. Pan pan were linguistic and cultural interlocutors, but, simultaneously, their abilities were “laughed off” or “humorous” despite being more linguistically endowed than their monolingual clientele. Here, Dower seems to focus more on demonstrating how the pan pan served as loci for U.S. American conquest. The rest of the paragraph continues:

And here lay the rub. The pan pan arm in arm with her GI companion, or riding gaily in his jeep, constituted a piercing wound to national pride in general and masculine pride in particular. Yet at the same time, these women were striking symbols of the whole convoluted phenomenon of “Americanization” in which everyone was in some way engaged. The panpan openly, brazenly *prostituted* themselves to the conqueror—while others, especially “good” Japanese who consorted with the Americans as privileged elites, only did it figuratively. This was unsettling.<sup>40</sup>

Dower goes on to describe the pan pan as “embarrassing” and exploitative of the “material comfort of the Americans” while in awe over the prosperity that “made America ‘great.’”

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<sup>39</sup> Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 133

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*, 134-35

“Among ordinary people,” he writes, “no group tapped the material treasures of the conquerors as blatantly as the panpan.”<sup>41</sup>

Dower’s assertions that the pan pan “revealed” or gave light to Japan’s defeat, thereby infecting it with embarrassment, reduce the pan pan to the status of a platform upon which the imagination of the Japanese national community, as embarrassed or traumatized, can create a sense of communion through the admonition of a woman who has sex with “foreigners”—a figure of complicity and defeat. This fails to inquire into why it is the affirmation (affirmability) of Japanese masculinity that sustains the image of Japan. Further, the Japanese government’s complicity with the U.S. government in the establishment of Pax Americana is symbolized as a sexual contract that perpetuates the image of the pan pan as a body onto which Japanese sense of sovereignty is inscribed. Cynthia Enloe, as well as many other feminist critics, have singled out the ways in which international relations play out onto the bodies of women by manipulating them as symbols and representatives of national victimhood. Whereas victimization is inscribed onto a feminine experience, masculinity operates, according to Enloe, in the realm of military action, politics, and policy-making.<sup>42</sup> Enloe’s suggestion that the nationalism invests in feminizing representations of national victimhood applies to the treatment of the pan pan during and after the Occupation. Particularly, it speaks to the ubiquity of representations of women in postwar literature that act as such platforms for the performance of the embarrassment or traumas of the masculine ego that represents the nation state.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*, 136

<sup>42</sup> Cynthia Enloe. *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990)

<sup>43</sup> This is not unlike how comfort women are coopted by the South Korean government as metaphors for nationhood trauma, which reifies and appropriates the bodies of sexual abuse victims within the rhetoric of international relations. Notably, the work of Lee Chonghwa, *Tsubuyaki no Seiji Shisō* (The Murmuring of Political Thought. Tokyo: Seidosha, 1994) and her edited collection of essays *Zansho no Ōto* (Still Hear the Wound, tra. Brett de Bary and Rebecca Jennison. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016) criticizes this conundrum faced by the future of

This form of nationalism remains contingent on the imagination of women's bodies as sites for the recovery of masculinity; they are not, in other words, invested in feminine experience. Appropriated for patriarchal discourse, the deployment of masculinism and the experience of its crisis among Japanese males has little to do with female subjects and more to do with the projection of anxiety and shame onto a perceived loss of balance in the triangulation of male desire within the context of occupation (or colonialism). In the introduction to *The Trans-Pacific Imagination: Rethinking Boundary, Culture and Society*, Sakai and Hyon Joo Yoo introduce the idea that such nationalisms that stem from the position of wounded capitalist nation states attempting to "recover" from a "crisis of masculinity" with the question of national trauma—which is often deployed in gendered and violently sexualized metaphors—as a masculine problem: "It is important to keep in mind that national victimhood is closely related to the issue of masculinity." "[N]ationalisms," they continue, "are premised upon desperate attempts to recover their lost masculinity<sup>44</sup>." Paradoxically, this crisis that mobilizes the discourse surrounding the figure of the pan pan, as exemplified in forms of sexual and gendered violence exercised by both Japanese and U.S. political actions, transformed the problem of Japan's "lost" masculinity into that of women's oppression. In psychoanalytic terms, the nationalisms of capitalist nation states (the would-be U.S. colonies), desire by the "colonized" male community predicates upon a problematically schematized castration anxiety—a paradoxical dialectic relation wherein the deprivation of the phallus (the deprivation of recognition within the customarily triangulated contract of homosocial relations in heterosexual

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remembering, listening to, and understanding the comfort women issue and sexual violence in colonial and postcolonial contexts.

<sup>44</sup> Of course, the figuring of the nation and the figuring of the psychoanalytic subject's ego, traditionally, are parts of distinct fields of inquiry. Geography and psychoanalysis rarely share discursive spaces despite their possible affinities. I argue, however, that the formation of the modern nation state as a figure metaphorized in the concept of the national body shares, in its discursive development, a commonality with Lacan's split subject.

sexuality) requires a fantasy of the national community as a supplement for a loss. This falls closely in line with what Lacan described as subject formation.<sup>45</sup> In nationalism, as a structure of subjectivization, the provisional sense of “beinglessness” encountered in the juncture of the split between the ego and the unconscious is also supplemented by a process of defense,<sup>46</sup> as with Freud’s concept of “splitting” (*Spaltung*). The idea of splitting brings to the surface a means for indicating difference, and, in turn, produces a discursive regime for understanding and perpetuating the repression of difference in often violent and oppressive ways. A concern for the phallus, or its lack thereof, mediates and supplements the ego, or the conscious; the “crisis of masculinity” in this form of nationalism, in other words, toxically depends on its fetishized denial of lost agency. Moreover, because this violent form of subject relation in nationalism is contingent on the proliferation of and manipulation of difference, one of the definitive and caustic qualities of masculinized nationalism is its figuration of women into sites for sustaining patriarchal power. In representation, the feminization of the nation as the battlefield for the crisis of masculinity—as is often figured in literature—creates the possibility for imagining a retrieval of masculine sexual agency on the one hand, and perceiving women, or bodies of difference, at the level of sub-subject, or sub-human. Nationalism in this sense constitutes a manner for relating to the state by locating the imagined community of sympathy (the nation, comprised of male, heterosexual, national subjects) as one constructed by Balibar’s notion of “anthropological differences”—“differences,” quoting Balibar, “perceived among humans that are also immediately constitutive of the *idea* of the human.”<sup>47</sup> And this mode of perceiving human

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<sup>45</sup> In *The Lacanian Subject* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), Bruce Fink explains Lacan’s discussion of the schema of the subject, “The subject is split between ego... and unconscious... between conscious and unconscious, between an ineluctably false sense of self and the automatic functioning of language (the signifying chain) in the unconscious.” (45)

<sup>46</sup> Seminars XIV and XV

<sup>47</sup> Balibar 2012, 209

relations, which is, according to Balibar, violent and inherently dehumanizing, is also the mode of perception implemented by the eye of Area Studies. A dislocation of this modality of nationalism and patriarchal fantasy could begin through an understanding of how the figure of the pan pan reveals the fragility and fragmentability of these formations.

These affinities between psychoanalytic discussions on the formation of the subject and the formation of the subject of the nation (who is, arguably, consistently gendered masculine) lead me to the question of whether a structural parallel between the nation and the human body exists, metaphorically, within the history of the casually employed figuration of the nation as a body in the term “the national body.” This body, which is the body of a modern political system that emerged, as Carl Schmitt’s *Nomos of the Earth In the International Law of Jus Publicum Europaeum* first outlined, out of a sixteenth century drive toward organizing groups of bodies within the borders of states through the model of territorial state sovereignty in Europe. Even when those very borders relied on their external and internal inscriptions and heavily depended upon a system of recognition to legitimize themselves, the logic of the territorial state sovereignty managed, in the so-called European Enlightenment and the movements that followed the concretization of an discourse of exceptionalism for Europe (and later “the West”) as comprised of sovereign states making up a new world order called the system of internationality.

Lacan’s theory of the “mirror stage” (*stade du miroir*) illustrates the process by which the ego develops out of a subject’s recognition of himself outside of his field of experiential perception.<sup>48</sup> Lacan exemplifies this process with a hypothetical scene: before being held to a mirror and by his mother, a baby has no perception of his physical limitations, of the

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<sup>48</sup> Jacques Lacan. “The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience.” From *Écrits: A Selection*, tra. Bruce Fink (New York: W.W Norton & Company, 2006; 2002) French edition: Jacques Lacan. “*Le stade du miroir comme formateur de la fonction du Je telle qu’elle nous est révélée dans l’expérience psychanalytique.*” From *Écrits* (Paris: Editions du Deuil, 1999; 1966)

demarcations between his and his mother's body. Only after this can the baby perceive himself as a whole image, separate from the mother but, at the same time, separate from the entity that preexisted the formation of subjectivity projected onto the complete baby before him. The experience induces a complex by which the baby will perpetually try to make up for this disconnect by donning the armor of his mirror image for the recognition of others. How his subjectivity develops depends on this perpetual split that is reliant upon an ego mechanism that facilitates a fantasy for fulfillment and totality as well as a separation from an "other."<sup>49</sup> In a sense, the crisis of subjectivity (the crisis of masculinity) is in itself what makes up the subject therefore plays out as a course of dealing with the excess of Otherness that results from the otherness of the ego and the Other that is the unconscious.<sup>50</sup> The example of the mirror stage is not only similar to, but also seems to parallel the formation of modern nation states as entities that are dependent on one another to legitimize their statuses as unified sovereignties despite the shifting modes of international relations in their external domains. A nation-state achieves its "national-ness" only through crystallizing an image of itself—through history, through language—through the territorialization of certain figures via the imagination of and dependence on the practice of other nationalisms. Étienne Balibar argues that the "becoming national" of modern nation-states inflicts upon these entities a split between the national and the state that is "never totally absent." States become nations, but nations may never form states insofar as the national depends on constant and strategic regulation of the mechanisms that maintain its illusion of cohesion:

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<sup>49</sup> This separation and fulfillment of entry into the fantasy of totality is also explained as the child's entry into language.

<sup>50</sup> Bruce Fink, again, recapitulates in the fourth chapter of *The Lacanian Subject*: "Language as Other does not automatically make a subject of a *homo sapiens* child; it can misfire, and it does in psychosi. This split is not something that can be explained in strictly linguistic or combinatory terms. It is thus in excess of structure. Though *the subject is nothing here but a split between two forms of otherness*—the ego as other and the unconscious as the Other's discourse—the split itself stands in excess of the Other." (46)

Thus, in the end, the historical nations are societies which take the political form of a state that is “national.” Either the states came into existence “endogenously,” seeming autonomously, in tandem with the process of nationalizing the state that was already located in that territory, or they came into existence via “nationalist” (or “national liberation”) movements, by struggling against national states that already existed or were being created, or against “non-national” sovereign states...<sup>51</sup>

The praxis of nationalizing the nation state, Balibar asserts, is always imperfect, caught up in a contradiction that disguises itself in the projections of preexisting forms of cultural or ethnic unities. These projections of unities and autonomies thereby allow nationalisms to protect themselves against the threat of extinction, fragmentation and delegitimization by reproducing their ideologies in the forms of national histories and myths about the totality of the nation, its culture and, often, its racial origins, creating ideologies of inclusivity that, in turn also facilitate the imagination of un-belonging Others.<sup>52</sup> If, as Balibar does, one can assert that the configuration of the nationality of the nation-state depends on, using Derrida’s words, “a ‘past’ that has never been present, and which will never be...” then one can clearly imagine the parallel in the contradictions that Balibar delineates with the contradictions illuminated in Lacan’s description of the mirror stage and the crucial split that constitutes the formation of the subject.

This reading on the fragile fragmentability of the nation and national subjectivity begets a question: how, then, is it possible for nationalism to imagine an inclusive community called

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<sup>51</sup> Balibar 2002, 85

<sup>52</sup> “In reality, the idea of nations without a state, or nations “before” the state, is thus a contradiction in terms, because a state is always implied in the historic framework of a national formation (even if not necessarily within the limits of its territory). But this contradiction is masked by the fact that national states, whose integrity suffers from internal conflicts that threaten its survival (regional conflicts, and especially class conflicts), project beneath their political existence to a preexisting “ethnic” or “popular” unity (into the past, into the depths of “civil” society). Or such historical collectives struggling against national states justify their claims to autonomy by drawing an ideal trajectory going from a more or less mythical origin (linguistic, religious, cultural, racial) toward an end considered to be the only historically normal possibility, the creation of its own state structure.” (Balibar 1991, 331)



“Japan”? Whereas the pan pan girls were understood as threats to the racial impenetrability of the “Japanese national body,” they also illuminated the futility of nationalism under Occupation and the failure of this metaphor to legitimize a basis for racist and misogynist policies. In other words, the tropes of revelation, uncovering and illumination deployed in postwar fiction about pan pan girls reveal the destabilization of national borders and, furthermore, retrospectively, the destabilization of the modes by which the literatures themselves can exist as purely “Japanese.”

A significant part of this project and its intersections with psychoanalytic theory involves a close, reflexive reading of the figure of the pan pan as a figure of in-betweenness, a metaphor for a border and for border-crossing that extends beyond the territoriality of the Japanese state. Often, in the field of Japanese literature the pan pan has been treated as a product of a very generalizing field of inquiry on sex work in Japan and the gaze through which male writers of certain branches of national literature (*nikutaiha*, *buraiha*) inscribe her into the tropological genealogy of woman as a metaphor of masculine trauma and shame. Consequently, if we attend to the fragility of such a formation and the irrevocability of its “split” through its invocation of an imagined “past that has never been present,” we are also inviting a question on the viability of creating a discipline that studies such an inclusive community. The particularizing lens through which writers produce work in Japanese Studies about portrayals of prostitute rarely understands the trope as part of a trans-national constellation of similar modalities of tropology. Japanese writers and filmmakers were, obviously, not the first artists (male artists) to encounter the visibility of the prostitute and see it as an incommensurable space through which to reify their bruised egos. Japanese writers and filmmakers were also not, obviously, the first to encounter the visibility of a female member of their national community engaging in sexual and romantic relations with non-members of the community within the context of occupation, imperialism or

the so-called American neo-imperialism of global capitalism. A plethora of visual and literary and texts produced and consumed in other parts of East Asia, Anglophone North America and Latin America commit to, under the phantom of Pax Americana and its compulsive reproduction into text and image, this trope. After all, what is the danger of reading the military sex worker beyond the confines of postcolonial nationalism or the resistance against the hegemony of U.S. imperialism? For one, it significantly undermines the validity of what Stuart Hall called the “discourse of the West and the rest”—upon which Area Studies, as a discipline, overlooks the heterogeneity of its objects of study and fails to question the impact that military prostitution had on the dislocation of previous fantasies for racial purity in both the United States and its occupied territories.

Reading the military sex worker beyond the confines of the homogenized spatio-temporality that Benedict Anderson called the “nation,” the work of such feminist scholarship destabilizes the discourse of the West for the Rest as this perspective creates relations and connections on trans-pacific, trans-national and trans-linguistic scales. I am inclined to view the figure of the pan pan and the insistence of the trope of the military prostitute in literature and cinema as a point of reference for locating the discontinuity of the fantasy of national homogeneity that reveals the need for an aesthetic filter to take the place of a heterolingual mode of translation (and a heterolingual mode of addressing the fiction of homogeneity) where it is needed and where the figure of the pan pan manifests as transpacific and heterogeneous, but is wrongfully dismissed as a symptom of nationalized masculine subjectivity.

Rey Chow raises helpful arguments and insights to this dilemma. In her analysis of the distancing of areas produced in the overvalue of anthropological difference in Area Studies, Chow describes how one of the most important aspects of Area Studies in the pre-9/11 United

States is, in fact, the continuous production of a border between the United States and its “Others.” Chow sees, however, the moment of the deconstruction of this characteristic through the impact of 9/11 and the intensification of xenophobic sentiments:

Area Studies capitalize on the intertwined logics of the world-as-picture and the world-as-target, always returning the results of knowing other cultures to the point of origin, the “eye”/”I” that is the American state and society.<sup>53</sup>

The xenophobic under-layers of work that creates enclosures out of knowledges that infringe upon the segregationist sensibilities of area specialists turn themselves, according to Chow, into epistemic conundrums. These conundrums, embodiments of area specialist anxieties and hysterias, especially arise when, for instance, insisting upon the denial of understanding Japan as something beyond the horizon of the homogeneous, empty time of the “nation.” In the face of this other “crisis” in the formation of Area Studies scholarship, my concluding reflections here aim to advocate a thinking through Johannes Fabian’s idea of “coevalness”—the validity of the claim that, for example, Occupation period sex worker and the black girl in Jim Crow America were part of a cartography of the intersecting modes of knowledge production and histories. It is, in fact, my conviction that the pan pan, as a case, necessitates a trans-nationalist, feminist approach to understand what she reveals about postwar Japan, the legacy of Pax Americana, and the formation of new racism in and beyond the early Cold War. Through a deconstructive, comparative analysis, the figure of the pan pan and her representation in text and image offers an opportunity to productively consider a global picture of the layers of fantasy that trans-nationally sustain a need to avoid the visibility of the rapid blurring of borders between the present and its responsibility to historical violence. As the gaze of Area Studies returns to its point of departure,

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<sup>53</sup> Chow 2008, 14

it cannot eschew its responsibility to assume the metaphorical role of the filter and accelerate the translation, deconstruction, of previously impermeable epistemic borders.

**Concluding Reflections:  
Race, Sex, and Knowledge Under Occupation**

In the introduction to *Crescent City Girls: The Lives of Young Black Women in Segregated New Orleans*, LaKisha Michelle Simmons describes what she calls the “double bind of white supremacy and respectability” through an account of a debate in Kentucky state law regarding the age of consent:

In 1895 Representative A.C. Tompkins of Kentucky argued against age of consent laws on the grounds that it was impossible for white men to rape black women. He declared, “We see at once what a terrible weapon for evil elevating the age of consent would be when placed in the hands of a lecherous, sensual negro woman, who for the sake of black mail or revenge would not hesitate to bring criminal action even though she had been a prostitute since her *eleventh year!*” Such sentiments, whether articulated through politics, local law enforcement, or cultural productions and images, partly shaped black girls’ coming-of-age during Jim Crow.<sup>54</sup>

Simmons argues that because of segregation laws and the ubiquity of visible violence inflicted upon black men (especially as punishments for claims of interracial rape), the experiences of racial and sexual violence toward black women and girls were often silenced and, at times, made invisible in public records. “Indeed,” she writes, “the violence enacted on black women and girls required silences” because highlighting the existence of white male violence against black girls “had the power to collapse racial meanings because white men were supposed to be upright, controlled, thoughtful citizens.” By bringing to focus the experiences of black women and girls in the segregated U.S. south between 1930 and 1954, Simmons’s work, modeled after contemporary black feminist scholarship and theory, shrewdly analyzes the gendered and racialized silences that epitomize representations of black girls in a context heavily saturated with the concretization of white male supremacy. Incomplete stories, silences, and nameless

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<sup>54</sup> Simmons 2015, 4

testimonies take on significant roles in the project of making known, at least partially, the stories of the lives of black girls, like King, lived through Jim Crow Laws and state-sanctioned racial and sexual terrorization. The first passage that I quoted, in particular, attends to the rhetoric of sexual violence in a racially segregated context. What Simmons calls the “double bind of white supremacy and respectability” therefore intimately (and often violently) connects to what could be called the biopolitical management of black girls’ bodies and sexualities. White male identity clearly depends, in this passage, on sustaining a fantasy of white male purity and legality (and its freedom from shame and punishment) by figuring its position through the belittlement of black girlhood—a position of perpetual shame owed to the racist discourse that envelops the black girl’s already assumed contemptible sexuality.

It may initially come as a surprise, in a work that deals with a completely different figure and a completely different geographic context, to even cite Simmons’s research here. Her study is both captivating and relevant to my writing on racism and the figure of the military sex worker, however, because of the extent to which segregation laws and racist policies in the United States could inform a reading of the U.S. Occupation in Japan and other parts of East Asia. In consequence, I want to begin this final reflection by asking, “What might it mean to eventually understand postwar representations of pan pan girls through the context of Jim Crow America?” Particularly, I want to point out a distant resonance between discourses and policies (as outlined in Simmons’s text) that figured black girlhood and black women’s sexualities in Jim Crow America and the discourses and policies that SCAP and the Japanese government implemented in the regulation of pan pan girls during the Occupation period. Both exist, in part, as structures that frame and reproduce U.S. sovereignty through an imagined subject, the U.S.

American (presumed white) male, by disavowing the possibility of his sexual shame.<sup>55</sup> And both, in part, are figures whose creations stem from a positivist dismissal of privileging a non-masculine position as a valid, representable perspective. In the accounts that I have referred to—primarily Kanzaki, Sakaguchi, and Mizoguchi’s—the experiences of the pan pan girls and the experiences of racial and sexual violence inflicted upon women’s bodies are continuously percolated through a masculine perspective. This problem also appears in Simmons’s book, which opens up with a critical stance toward the representation of women’s experiences with racism and sexual violence as secondary or accessories to black men’s far more visible experiences with lynching and other “visual” forms of racial violence.<sup>56</sup>

Although, obviously, not all who raped black girls in the Jim Crow South were white men, and not all American G.I.’s and SCAP employees who had sexual contact (consensual or otherwise) were white men, the fantasy that operates under racism created, in these two contexts, a discourse through which policies, institutions, and political actions were performed, in large part, for the gaze of U.S. American whiteness. This is a structure of desire and self-figuring that

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<sup>55</sup> Here, I am using sovereignty through Schmitt’s terminology and Foucault’s elucidations. In *The Nomos of the Earth*, Schmitt argues that the United States transformed the definition of sovereignty by implementing a new mode of territorial acquisition that no longer reflected the hegemonic image of Western Europe. This is what critics of American imperialism in fact called Pax Americana. In the twentieth century, the United States became a polity that continued to redefine what Schmitt originally called “territorial state sovereignty” because it created a possibility to create nationalized communities, like Japan, that do not necessarily adhere to or wield the capacity to intensify a sense of nation without themselves exercising territorial state sovereignty. For Foucault, sovereignty transforms, through the rise of biopower, into the justification of state action through its new right to make live and let die; the power structure entrenched in sovereignty thus exists in the institutions, mechanisms, and technologies of normalization that develop as modes of organizing and managing populations.

It is, however, important for my project to take into account the unconscious and imaginary mechanisms that are involved in the deployment and articulation of sovereignty and they pass through racial, gender, and power relations, in representation and posturing.

<sup>56</sup> “Some gendered experiences cannot be fully expressed or even conceptualized,” Simmons claims. “For example, Ambassador Andrew Young reinforced this history when, just after Coretta Scott King’s death, he spoke of her experience growing up with racism in the rural South. Young said that King endured an extraordinarily ‘bitter experience of racism and segregation’ during her childhood in Alabama because she witnessed the burning of her father’s business by ‘Klan types.’ In Young’s account, Coretta Scott King experienced racism primarily through the violence that happened to *her farther*. Her own ‘bitter experiences’ of growing up a girl during the Jim Crow era were unspoken...” (Simmons, 3)

occludes the possibility for presumed white male disgrace or shame in the face of racialized girlhood. And this is also a structure of desire that appropriates racialized girlhood as a platform through which to either ignore or demonize the existence of interracial sexual relations, or miscegenation. And as a result, this form of appropriation makes possible a mode of knowledge reproduction that can willfully ignore dealing with its own heavily racialized framework. I have considered the fragmented stories of figures like the pan pan girl as the beginning of a deconstructive critique of the respectability of this mode of knowledge production which, in the framework of studying postwar Japan (and its estranged yet ever present colonial legacies), is called Area Studies.

As distant and, indeed, segregated as the context of Simmons's book is from my project and its field of study, I want to validate the reason for bringing it into contact with my work because of what can be seen as their uncanny affinities. In undeniable ways, the figure of the pan pan and the rhetoric of ethnonational purity ascribed to postwar Japanese selfhood link to a process of de-shaming and purifying the image of white, U.S. American, male subjectivity—the process, in other words, that creates the conditions for racial difference and the primacy of white supremacy. More concretely, this affinity points to one of the ways in which, during the period of Jim Crow Laws and the Asia-Pacific War, the image of U.S. American supremacy and the idea of racial “purity” transformed the function of sovereignty through the sexual politics of postwar nationalism.

The verb “purify” and its nominal “purification” belie the definitive description of the noun “purity.” “Purify” means, according to the Oxford Dictionary, “to remove contaminants from; to make ceremoniously clean; to extract something from a substance.” Here, another metaphor of the filter of filtration returns to depict the *prescriptive* process by which an object



attains purity; this filtering, however, requires an active, ceremonious undoing and purging of an unbroken element to reassemble it as sterilized ideal that conceals its contaminated concepts by trapping them inside the obscure filter. And so, only through the end point of this filtering, through representation, does this “purification” make white supremacy viable. Hence, repeating Simmons’s words, experiences that challenged this filtering, the violence enacted on racialized women by the *system* of white male supremacy often “required silences.” Those required silences, however, rendered possible the return of repressed notions about sexuality and race that were apparent, and even jarring, in the texts and images that recorded the Occupation.

Sexual ownership and control of racialized women by men, in fact, materialized a new form of sovereignty, in which the rhetoric of sexual politics in nationalism (the idea of Japanese racial homogeneity) sanctioned and reproduced U.S. sovereign power in the Occupation. The figurative distancing of whiteness from its Other not only projects the image of Japanese ethnonational purity and the rhetoric of white respectability themselves, but also reveals the a configrative dependence on images that contrast, and even violate, those projections. Violence makes possible the continuation of relations of what Foucault calls “biopower” that stem from the positivist discourses of institutions and technologies that aimed at normalizing and reinforcing the sexual behavior of marginalized groups for the benefit of preserving the function of this other metaphorical filter. The challenge that attention to the experiences of black girls and pan pan girls pose, however, is that as each figure is used to represent the filter, they simultaneously signify the visibility (the *akarui*) of the transformation of sovereign power and its problematic prerequisites. As Chazono Toshimi writes of Kanzaki Kiyoshi’s anxiety toward the visibility of pan pan girls, “Precisely because [pan pan] used G.I.’s [for their own interests],

these women were pregnant with the possibility to dismantle patriarchy.”<sup>57</sup> Chazono’s statement figuratively exposes the failure of the government’s paternalistic view of militarized sexual labor, and at the same time points to the visibility of a literal dismantling of a notion of racial purity that served as the fulcrum of new nationalism in the postwar. In a sense, the posturing of selfhood under the hegemony of white supremacist ideology, its patrimony in postwar Japanese ethno-nationalism, and the normativity and legitimacy of patriarchy, more generally, were compromised at the scene of the Occupation because the figure of the pan pan girl signaled a future legibility of their fallacy. And within the broader, transpacific framework of the scene of the Occupation, the question of racialized girlhood may play a double role in the construction and deconstruction of what Balibar calls “fictive ethnicity” and its contribution to the formation of the national community.<sup>58</sup>

Through the overwriting of a possibility for disgrace or sense of imperial loss, the discourse of and on Japanese ethno-nationalism relies heavily on the dislocation of shame onto a figure that occupies the place of femininity (like the pan pan) just as the impossibility for disgrace and loss of respectability for white male supremacy relies on its dislocation onto the silencing of black women’s experiences. The specialist of Japanese Studies can therefore call the pan pan a symbol of national (or racial) shame. The specialist can therefore call the figure of the black girl or woman a symbol of national (or racial) shame. Moreover, the specialist can claim that, since they are not traditionally discussed in the same academic contexts, these two ideas exist in disparate disciplines in the traditional model of the U.S. university. This is possible so long as the specialist continues to deny that this discourse reproduces problematic narrative that obfuscates a history of the erasure of sexual and racial violence. Reading, considering, and

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<sup>57</sup> Chazono 2014, 63

<sup>58</sup> Balibar 2002, 96

writing about the Occupation of Japan, however, does require a consideration of Jim Crow America (and, possibly, vice versa) and other transnational (and trans-imperial) contexts that elucidate the double binds of white male respectability and the experiences of racialized femininity. And likewise, thinking about how domestic and international biopolitical policies in the United States intersect through the juncture of racial and sexual relations requires an understanding of how imaginary structures, like racism, inaugurate new frames of nationalism in the service of white supremacist hegemony outside of the United States. My reactive, perhaps even responsive, modality of creating a format for producing this knowledge inherits the conventions of Area Studies, but at the same time simultaneously aims to resist enclosing itself within a discipline borne out of a colonial and racist system of oppression that mapped the cartography of its disciplinary questions.

Provided that literature reflects the historical, political, and social aporias of the period following the Asia-Pacific War, analysis of the figure of the pan pan becomes very important in the study of the intersection between race and gender in the postwar. As a figure that deviates from patriarchal institutions, yet is simultaneously a symbol for the fear of symbolic castration, the pan pan manifests domain for the displacement of male anxiety, and the displacement of the queerness of a new patriarchy. It is through the potential of the imaginary, therefore, that the literary text becomes akin a *lieux de memoire*, a site of memory, that, according to Pierre Nora, persists despite the disconnections enforced in the rhetoric of the Occupation and the subsequent discourse on race in Japan popularized by the U.S. academy.

Pan pan girls represent the entanglements between various registers of the process of new colonialism in East Asia under Pax Americana. Literary writing may not necessarily support but nonetheless becomes a reflection of this process because it repeats the deployment of figures that

facilitate a precarious imagining of the national body. Where a sense of the nation exists in literary representations of the pan pan, so, too, does the figure of empires past and present, loom over as additional, unconscious entities that participate in the construction of the fictive pan pan. The role of “Akarui Uncanny” is, therefore, not necessarily to vituperate the quandaries involved in the representation of marginal feminine subjects by male authors or filmmakers, but to consider these quandaries as they come into relation with moments of trauma, fragmentation, and revelation in the juncture of a trans-pacific new imperialism otherwise known as Pax Americana. In other words, what the figure of the pan pan, which I contend is ultimately a trans-imperial figure, invokes the potential of a text to reveal what Derrida calls an *aporia*—“the refused, denied, or prohibited passage, indeed the nonpassage, which can in fact be something else, the event of a coming or a future advent... which no longer has the form of movement that consists in passing, traversing, or transiting.”<sup>59</sup>

Indeed, what I have described as the *akarui* uncanniness of the pan pan, is part of this aporia and partakes in the repetition of the narrative of the Occupation while suspending the pan pan’s status as a double-edged (or, possibly, multiple-edged) problem that cannot disappear.<sup>60</sup> Insofar as the text of the Occupation is haunted by the figure of the pan pan, when we examine these critical discourses on racial politics during and after the Asia-Pacific War, we can perhaps begin to survey how the pan pan became a figure that bears witness to the construction (and threat) of the fantasy of ethno-nationalism that is still often reproduced in traditional Area Studies. Given her still-rare privilege of a platform in Area Studies, the figure of the pan pan, and the question of racialized girlhood, could uncannily illuminate other possibilities for dismantling

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<sup>59</sup> Derrida 1993, 8

<sup>60</sup> My understanding of the aporia, in this sense, is owed to Rada Iveković’s lecture at the 2016 Flying University of the Transnational Humanities, “Theory and Practice in Translation and the Partitioning of Reason.”

an epistemological stranglehold of the double binds of racist and patriarchal structures and their reflections in forms of knowledge production that limit themselves to a unilateral view of the “nation.”

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